CREEPSHOW

A Screenplay

By Stephen King

1st Draft

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LAUREL
30 Lincoln Plaza
Suite 21C
New York, N. Y. 10023

FADE IN:

1 EXT. A SUBURBAN STREET NIGHT 1

A thunderstorm is brewing. We hear the SOUND of rumbling thunder, and lightning--not in strokes, but sort of diffuse and as yet unfocussed--flashes. The lightning shows us "a typical suburban street," as they say; only this one is almost too perfect. Ranch houses; little landscaped plots of lawn; cars parked at the curbs; a toy or two of the Big Wheels variety left out.

The one thing we will notice here is that the trash cans have been put out all up and down the block.

In the foreground we can see a street sign; this is Maple Street, and tomorrow on Maple Street the city dumpsters will roll.

Tonight, however, a thunderstorm is brewing.

SOUND: a louder crack of lightning.

TITLE CARD: CENTERVILLE, U.S.A.

THE CAMERA BEGINS TO MOVE down Maple Street, passing houses. The SOUND of the wind is rising. In between this SOUND and that of the thunder, we begin to hear a voice, raised and angry; lecturing. We can't make out every word. It isn't necessary that we should.

MAN'S VOICE
...this CRAP! I never saw such rotten crap in my life! Where do you get this shit? Who sells it to you? (pause; sound is lost) ...talking to you, young man! You want to answer me when I talk to you! You know who puts the frigging bread on the table around here, don't you?

THE CAMERA HAS STOPPED at one of the ranch-houses about halfway down Maple Street; now it begins to move up the wall. The door opens for the CAMERA just as it begins to rain. Lightning again, this time a stroke, followed by a loud crash of thunder. THE CAMERA is in the hallway now, and the voices are clearer.

WOMAN'S VOICE
Stan, don't be too hard on him. All the kids read them.

1 CONTINUED 1

STAN'S VOICE
My boy isn't ALL the KIDS. You want to know where this is going, Billy? In the garbage. Right into the frigging garbage. Now you got any smartmouth about that?

Silence. THE CAMERA BEGINS TO MOUNT THE STAIRS.

STAN'S VOICE
Well? Speak up!

BILLY'S VOICE (hysterical; defiant)
I don't see how it's any worse than the books you keep in the top drawer of your bureau! The ones under your underwear! Those sex-b--

SOUND of a slap. BILLY begins to cry.

WOMAN'S VOICE
Stan, you didn't have to--

STAN'S VOICE
--hit him? Now I find out he's not only reading this crap, he's a goddam little snoop as well.

BILLY (weeping)
No, it wasn't like that...you sent me after your cufflinks...it was on Sunday...you said for me to get your cufflinks...and I looked there because I thought...and I saw...

A loud crack of thunder obliterates the rest. THE CAMERA has reached the upper hall and proceeds down it, away from the voices. It stops in front of a door, which also opens--the magic of movies!--before it. THE CAMERA GOES IN. It's dark. Empty. A bedroom. Lightning flares, lighting the window ghastly purple. Something is staring in at us, something horrible and rotten and grinning, with hair that is falling away in patches. It beckons us, and THE CAMERA MOVES FORWARD.

WOMAN'S VOICE (upset)
I thought I heard the front door open. I...I'll go down...and close it. The rain will come in...

STAN'S VOICE (disgusted)
I'll do it. I've got some garbage to throw away.

1 CONTINUED (2) 1

BILLY'S VOICE
Daddy...please...I'm sorry...

STAN'S VOICE
And if I ever see you with a worthless piece of shit like this again, you won't sit down for a week, buddyboy!

Another stroke of lightning. The thing at the window might be a very old witch; might be a rotting corpse. It looks at us with a kind of lunatic glee. And points at the street.

THE CAMERA MOVES UP TO THE WINDOW. When the lightning flashes again, the vision, apparition, whatever it was, is gone. We see only Maple Street from this second-story vantage point. It's now windswept and rather wild-looking; perhaps one of those Big Wheels, ridden only by the stormwind, skitters slowly past along the sidewalk.

The garbage cans which belong to the members of this household stand as if spotlighted near an overhead arc-sodium streetlight.

Downstairs, the SOUND of the front door slamming. A moment later we see STAN, back-to, approaching the garbage cans with something in one hand. The wind ripples his clothes madly.

2 INT. THE DOOR AT THE HEAD OF THE STAIRS, CLOSED 2
NIGHT

We can see a light under the door. From within, the SOUND of BILLY, sobbing.

From downstairs the fron door opens briefly, letting in the SOUNDS of the storm, then closes.

STAN'S VOICE
That takes care of that.

WOMAN'S VOICE
Stan, don't you think you were... well, a little hard on him?

STAN'S VOICE
Did you see that crap? That horror crap? Things coming out of crates and eating people and crawling hands and dead people coming back to life?

2 CONTINUED 2

WOMAN'S VOICE (doubtful)
Ye-ess...

STAN'S VOICE (truculent)
You want him reading that?

WOMAN'S VOICE
Well...no.

STAN'S VOICE (satisfied)
All right, then. I took care of it. That's why God made fathers, babe. That's why God made fathers.

We now hear the SOUND of STAN opening his newspaper. The rattling paper sounds somehow complacent and self-satisfied. From behind the closed door, the sniffling has stopped.

BILLY'S VOICE (low; sure; horrible)
I hope you rot in hell.

SOUND of a loud thunderclap.

3 EXT. MAPLE STREET NIGHT 3

THE CAMERA descends the steps and goes back down the walk toward the street. SOUNDS of the storm are very loud, now--howling wind, thunder almost contunuous.

THE CAMERA approaches the garbage cans...and peers into one. On top of the other crap is a colorful comic magazine. Its title--CREEPSHOW--is lettered in a spooky logo, the letters dripping and running a bright green. Stamped across the bottom are the words FIRST ISSUE COLLECTORS' EDITION!

The picture shows a man in a priest's outfit kneeling in a coffin, stake in one hand, mallet in the other. A vampire, its skin a grisly white, is half out of the coffin. It is grinning; its hands are around the throat of the terrified priest, who is about to drop his stake. The priest's expression is a gruesome and almost medieval evocation of horror.

SOUND of thunder; lightning flickers, lighting the cover faintly blue.

SOUND of the wind, rising. It blows the cover back to the first page of the magazine. The inner front cover shows an excited cartoon kid, who is selling a newspaper which

3 CONTINUED 3

might be GRIT...or maybe it's greeting cards, or Clovertine Brand Salve.

The facing page is the SPASH-PAGE of the first story. It shows us four people having an English tea in the sitting room of what is obviously a gracefully-appointed house. In the background, a window looks out on a small, ill-tended family graveyard; tombstones leaning this way and that, overgrown by grass and weeds. A cross shows here and there, and the frowning facade of a crypt.

The story title is FATHER'S DAY.

(NOTE: There may be a few main credits in a box at the bottom of the SPASH-PAGE, or maybe they're all saved for the end. If they are boxed, I'd advise keeping them in the comic-book mode, as: ARTWORK: George Romero...SCRIPT: Stephen King...THIS ISH PRODUCED BY: Richard Rubenstein... and so-on. I think this would be sorta fun.)

THE CAMERA MOVES IN on the SPLASH-PAGE, and the lettering --all of it--simply disappears. For a moment the SPLASH-PAGE is there, and then it becomes a FREEZE-FRAME...and then it begins to move.

4 INT. THE PARLOR OF THE GRANTHAM HOUSE LATE DAY 4

There are four people in the room, two men, two women. One of the women, SYLVIA GRANTHAM, is in her late 40s, with silvery hair. Both men, RICHARD GRANTHAM and HANK BLAINE, are in their twenties, dressed in sports clothes. The other woman, CASS BLAINE, is in her early twenties, a dark-haired knockout, the sort of woman any man would be happy to crawl along behind with his tongue sweeping the pavement. She's wearing jeans (probably Calvin Klein), and a silky white shirt, open to below the cleavage. The cleavage is mighty tasty-looking, friends and neighbors.

SYLVIA has a cup of tea halfway to her lips. CASS is buttering a biscuit, or a scone, or some damn thing. Both she and HANK, her husband, are looking toward RICHARD; RICHARD, in turn, appears to be speaking to SYLVIA.

As the FREEZE-FRAME begins to move, SYLVIA'S teacup goes to her mouth, and CASS finishes buttering and begins to eat...daintily but still rather greedily.

RICHARD
Do you really think she'll be out, Aunt Sylvia?

4 CONTINUED 4

CASS
Oh-ho-ho! You could set your watch by her. Four o'clock on the dot.

HANK glances over at the clock on the wall; it reads 3:40.

RICHARD (to SYLVIA)
Will she?

SYLVIA (indifferently)
You know she will. Pass those scones, Cass. You're such a hog. (to HANK) You married a hog, Henry. You know that, don't you? Cass has...healthy appetites.

CASS
Hank, Aunt Sylvia. He likes Hank.

HANK
Will who be out, Cass?

RICHARD
You mean Cass hasn't told you about dotty old great-aunt Bedelia? The patriarch of the clan?

HANK (carefully)
Isn't she the one who was supposed to have...well...

SYLVIA is buttering scones with great abandon, eating rapidly, laying waste to the table in general.

SYLVIA
Supposed to have killed her father, yes. Supposed to have bopped the old poop with a glass ashtray. HE was the real patriarch of us all, Richard. Made all the money, didn't he? Doesn't that qualify him for patriarch status? Of course it does!

HANK looks rather nonplussed at this. CASS giggles, and her brother RICHARD also looks amused; SYLVIA merely continues with her grande dame imitation. She speaks to HANK.

SYLVIA
Bedelia is MY aunt, Henry, which means she's older than God. But HER father, Nathan Grantham, was

4 CONTINUED (2) 4

SYLVIA (continues)
even older than that. Old poop simply would not die. She was acquitted, you know. If that makes any difference to you.

RICHARD laughs. HANK looks embarrassed. CASS pouts.

CASS
It's HANK, Aunt Sylvia, can't you remember that?

AUNT SYLVIA smiles with bright malice.

SYLVIA
Of course, every family should have at least one skeleton in its closet and one black sheep in its pasture. Don't you agree...HENRY?

HANK hems and haws. Anything he says will be the wrong thing. SYLVIA smiles at him with that happy, nasty sort of malice. RICHARD rescues him.

RICHARD
However it happened, Hank, the old man deserved to die. He wasn't a poop, or an old rip, or ninety-five years young, or any of those things. He was a monster, and he got rich on bootleg and smuggling and extortion and murder-for-hire 'way back in 1910, if you believe the stories. If she killed him, I say more power to her.

CASS (ironically)
Bravo!

5 EXT. A TARRED COUNTRY ROAD DAY 5

A big Lincoln sweeps past us, going fast.

6 INT. THE LINCOLN, WITH AUNT BEDELIA DAY 6

Here we have an old woman who was perhaps once noble-looking but who now seems ravaged. Perhaps she is AUNT SYLVIA'S peer in age, but she looks twenty years older. Her face is haunted, dazed. As she drives, she leans over and opens the glove compartment (the Lincoln swerves dangerously) and takes a bottle of Jim Beam out. She swigs straight from the neck of the bottle, then returns it (the car swerving wildly again).

6 CONTINUED 6

SYLVIA (voice over)
He simply would not die, Henry. It was as if he had made a pact with the devil, or something. And the abuse Bedelia took...well...

RICHARD (v/o)
According to the story, he was hysterically jealous of her all his life--the Compleat Freudian Relationship. Then, when he was ninety-something, he had a stroke, and she got to nurse him full time. And she met a man. A real September courtship--

Up ahead, the house has pulled into view, a real Victorian monstrosity of a place.

7 EXT. THE LITTLE GRAVEYARD BEHIND THE HOUSE DAY 7

As the voices CONTINUE, THE CAMERA MOVES IN on the grave of NATHAN GRANTHAM; his dates are obscured by tall grass. The headstone is a good-sized granite job.

CASS
Sep-TEM-ber courtship? Oh my God, that was October or November at the very least, made the night before Christmas. He was seventy-five if he was a day, and great-aunt Bedelia is--

SYLVIA
Never mind, dears. The point is, Henry, she loved the man. And Nathan had him killed.

8 INT. THE PARLOR DAY 8

The tea-things have mostly been eaten now, mostly by CASS and AUNT SYLVIA. HANK at last looks shocked. He sets his teacup down with a clatter. CASS and her brother RICHARD look amused; AUNT SYLVIA rather indulgent. This is old family history to them.

RICHARD
Well, that's the story they tell around here, anyway, Hank. The old guy--Yarbro, his name was--supposedly died in a hunting accident. That's what's on the books, anyway.

8 CONTINUED 8

CASS
For Bedelia, it was the last straw. She bashed her father with the glass ashtray--

RICHARD
--so rumor has it--

SYLVIA
And either way, it was good riddance to bad rubbish. And my lovely niece and handsome nephew had their own reasons to be please, no matter if dear old Nathan fell or was struck...didn't you, dears?

CASS looks mildly and sulkily put out at this; RICHARD merely bored. Perhaps he buffs his fingernails on the leg of his pants as AUNT SYLVIA goes on in her pleasant, rather spiteful way.

SYLVIA
You see, Henry, whatever his methods may have been, Nathan was the only Grantham in recent times to have any kind of a touch for making money. The talents of we lesser Granthams lay more in the other direction; we are very good at spending it. Lovely Cass enjoys buying her clothes at Bloomies' and her accessories at Saks'. Richard has a Mercedes and a passion for the horses. And Nathan would not indulge either of them. Naughty of him, wasn't it...Henry? But Aunt Bedelia solved all the problems. There was no trouble about the will; share and share alike. Lawyers have such an annoying habit of skimming off the cream, don't they? And every Father's Day Aunt Bedelia comes up here...and meditates by his grave for nearly an hour...and then she comes in and has dinner with her grateful kinfolk.

CASS (spitefully)
While you're at it, Aunt Sylvia, why don't you tell Hank about your summer house in Bermuda? And your place in Rome? Your life-time Eurail pass? Your--

8 CONTINUED (2) 8

AUNT SYLVIA holds up a hand and speaks regally.

SYLVIA
Cassandra. Darling. How can such a beautiful woman bw such an utter turd?

9 EXT. THE LINCOLN DAY 9

The car is now leaving the tarred road and moving up a long dirt driveway toward the house. It weaves unsteadily back and forth. Dust spumes behind it.

10 INT. THE PARLOR DAY 10

HANK is the only one who looks discomfited by AUNT SYLVIA'S last remark. RICHARD is still bored, CASS mildly disgusted. We get the feeling that these two women sharpen their claws on each other on a regular basis.

HANK (awkwardly)
Why Father's Day?

SYLVIA
Because she feels guilty.

CASS (laughs)
Oh, Aunt Sylvia!

SYLVIA (very seriously)
But it's true. For more than thirty years, she allowed herself to become devoted to him; I suppose you could even say that she worshipped his foul presence. And then, on Father's Day, just seven years ago...And every Father's Day since then...

HANK (impulsively)
Do you think she really did it, Mrs. Grantham?

AUNT SYLVIA looks at him, then at CASS; CASS glances at RICHARD.

AUNT SYLVIA (lightly)
Oh yes, I think she killed him. But her guilt is a real thing, and I believe it may eventually kill her. Despite what Cass may think, patricide is a terrible crime, no

10 CONTINUED 10

AUNT SYLVIA (continues)
matter how evil the pater may have been. But Henry...Cass knows remarkable little about guilt. Of ANY kind.

CASS (stung at last)
That's a hell of a--

SOUND of the clock striking four cuts her off; they all look around toward the window, and as the last stroke of the clock dies off, we hear the SOUND of the Lincoln's motor.

HANK
Is that--?

SYLVIA
Oh, yes. You could set your watch by her, Henry. She'll meditate and then the four of us will sit down to a nice baked ham dinner with her. The four of us who owe her so much. Correct, children?

SYLVIA looks around at them. No one says anything. And THE CAMERA looks out the parlor window to where the Lincoln is stopping at the twin cemetery pillars and the driver's side door is opening.

11 EXT. AUNT BEDELIA DAY 11

In the bright light, she looks more ravaged than ever, if that is possible. She has a spray of flowers in one hand, her bottle of Beam in the other. Her eyes are red and raw-looking. THE CAMERA FOLLOWS as she enters the Grantham family cemetery.

The place is a mess. The grass is high and rank, the leaning gravestones ill-tended. We hear the reedy SOUND of crickets. AUNT BEDELIA walks in with the automatic, blank determination of the damned.

THE CAMERA MOVES IN on AUNT BEDELIA'S face, and as it does, we hear an echoey knocking SOUND; it is wood-on-wood, but far away, either in distance or in time. Gradually, as THE CAMERA CONTINUES TO MOVE IN, the SOUND GROWS LOUDER.

12 INT. A ROOM DUSK 12

What must surely be one of the world's oldest and most evil-looking men is rapping on the papered wall of a room

12 CONTINUED 12

we may recognize as the parlor with his cane. He is sitting in an old-fashioned wicker-back wheelchair. The rapping on the wall is steady, implacable, maddening. When he speaks, his voice has the same echoey quality.

NATE
I want m'cake! Bedelia! Where's my cake? It's Father's Day! I... WANT...MY...CAKE!!

The old man is babyish and senile, but there is still something terrible about him.

13 EXT. THE FAMILY CEMETERY, WITH AUNT BEDELIA DAY 13

Walking; weeping; perhaps slugging from the bottle of Beam; in the background, the SOUND of the knocking cane grows ever louder, overwhelming the SOUND of the crickets now, overwhelming everything, pounding into our ears.

14 INT. A KITCHEN, WITH AUNT BEDELIA DUSK 14

She should look seven years younger here. She is just finishing decorating a frosted cake. She glances toward the SOUND of the knocking cane--harried, distracted, shaky --and then back down at her work. She does one final curlique and puts her decorating-tube aside. The top of the cake reads HAPPY FATHER'S DAY inside a mass of curliques and flowers.

NATE (v/o; bellowing)
BEDEEEELIA!...I WANT MY CAAAAYYYYKE!

She claps her hands to her ears, but the SOUND of the knocking, if anything, increases in volume. She opens her mouth and she might be screaming, but over the knocking SOUND of NATE'S cane (which now sounds like artillery fire), we can hear nothing.

15 INT. THE PARLOR WALL, CLOSE-UP DUSK 15

The cane comes down, perhaps in SLOW MOTION, and connects with the wall; this time the SOUND is like a rifle report.

16 EXT. A FIELD SOMEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY DAWN 16

An elderly but rather handsome man--YARBRO--is walking steadily through the tall grass. He is wearing a red-checked hunting jacket and a flourescent orange cap. A shotgun lies over his arm. His eyes are searching steadily and carefully for some sort of game. We hear a clicking SOUND. YARBRO looks toward it.

16 CONTINUED 16

The SOUND of a rifle-shot. YARBRO'S lower face disappears in a splash of blood and bone. He is thrown backwards into the meadow, his own gun discharging as he lands.

We hear the SOUND of feet approaching; a moment later boots and the barrel of a rifle come into the frame. Then they move away.

Throughout, the echoey SOUND of the cane, knocking on the wall; now it becomes very loud again.

17 INT. THE KITCHEN DUSK 17

AUNT BEDELIA is doing a number on the cake. She has seized the red decorator tube of frosting and is squeezing it all over the top of the cake in random patterns. The SOUND of the knocking is thunder.

18 EXT. THE FAMILY CEMETERY, WITH AUNT BEDELIA DAY 18

She is walking toward NATE'S grave.

19 INT. A HALLWAY, WITH AUNT BEDELIA DAY OR NIGHT 19

Here BEDELIA looks seven years younger again. The hallway is a cold tile throat, lit by flourescents. She is flanked by men in white coats; her face is dazed. CAMERA FOLLOWS through a door with a frosted glass panel. In the room beyond it, a sheeted body lies on a slab.

CAMERA MOVES IN on the body. A hand reaches out and whisks the sheet back. It is YARBRO, his face gone in a mass of coagulated blood from the mouth down, the rest of him livid with death.

VOICE
Can you identify this man as Peter Richard Yarbro, your fiance?

AUNT BEDELIA screams. She screams and screams, until the SOUND is covered by the knocking SOUND.

20 INT. THE KITCHEN DUSK 20

The kitchen is empty. The defaced cake still sits on the counter near the stove. The red frosting that has been squirted all over the top looks like blood. The knocking SOUND goes on and on.

21 INT. THE PARLOR, WITH NATE DUSK 21

He sits in his wheelchair, knocking single-mindedly against the wall with his cane. His face is petulant and cruel.

21 CONTINUED 21

NATE
I want my cake, Bedelia, where's my cake? It's Father's Day and I want it! You're all a bunch of worthless no-goods, sponging off me; WHERE'S MY FATHER'S DAY CAKE? I WANT IT! I WANT--

Now we hear a screaming SOUND that gets louder and louder. NATE stops pounding with his cane and tries to turn around so he can see.

AUNT BEDELIA comes bursting out of the shadowy hallway leading back to the kitchen. She is totally mad; a harpy. Her hands are up near her face and clawing at the air. As she passes and end-table she grabs up a glass ashtray, probably without even seeing or knowing what it is she has.

As she reaches NATE'S wheelchair, she swings it high over her head. NATE, at the last, realizes that he is about to get a one-time-only Father's Day present, and his face registers shock and fear.

Ineffectually, he puts his hands up.

NATE
Bedelia! No! NO! NOOO--

She brings the ashtray down hard, cleaving the rotten old bastard's skull. Blood everywhere. He topples out of his wheelchair onto the floor. His can lands beside him. His eyes are wide and dead.

AUNT BEDELIA stands over him, dazed; then she begins to smile; then to giggle; then to laugh. She stands over her dead father, the bloody ashtray in one hand, screaming with laughter.

BEDELIA
Happy Father's Day, daddy! We'll have the cake later, okay? Okay? Okay? You shouldn't have had Peter killed, but Happy Father's Day anyway! Happy--

But she can't continue. Her laughter in that shadowed room is like the screams of the damned; and THE CAMERA MOVES DOWN to the dead and staring face of NATE GRANTHAM in its pool of blood.

22 EXT. THE GRANTHAM FAMILY GRAVEYARD, WITH BEDELIA 22
DAY

She has reached NATE'S grave. The stone is a little bigger, a little newer, the grass a little shorter. She kneels down (staggering a little) and puts the flowers by the headstone. She puts the bottle of Beam in the grass beside her. When she speaks, her voice is old, hesitant, and roughened by booze.

BEDELIA
Daddy, I'm so sorry...I know it was wrong...and bad...but daddy, you should have let me have Peter. You didn't have to have him killed. I would have still taken care of you. You...you just never wanted to share, did you? But I'm sorry, just the same. I just...I just got so MAD, you know...it was the sound of your cane, I think...it got into my head...and I couldn't think... and...and...

She falls silent for a moment, just staring ar the headstone. Then a look of mild surprise crosses her face.

BEDELIA
The police let me go because the ashtray was where it was supposed to be and your body was over by that endtable, daddy...your wheelchair was overturned...and there were no fingerprints on the ashtray, either. They let me go. I suppose it was Sylvia, wasn't it? Yes, of course it was. Sylvia kept me out of jail. I wonder why I can't thank her?

She fumbles for the bottle of Beam, knocks it over, picks it up, and has a drink. She puts it aside and it falls over again; the remainder of the bourbon gurgles out unnoticed onto the grass.

BEDELIA
Anyway, daddy, I...I miss you. I guess I'm the only one who does. So...so happy Father's Day, daddy. Happy Fa--

Suddenly--AND WITH NO WARNING AT ALL--NATE GRANTHAM sits up in his grave. There is a ripping SOUND of small roots giving way, and the ground rises up as an almost unified

22 CONTINUED 22

whole. The effect would be something like a man sitting up suddenly in bed and throwing off a quilt.

The corpse is a rotted horror; bones show through here and there; the clothes are tattered and grimy with earth. One eye is only a socket. A few wisps of hair cling to the thing's skull; a ring on one finger has turned green.

NATE reaches for BEDELIA with strangler's hand. She screams, tries to back away, falls over.

NATE (croaking horribly)
WHERE'S MY CAKE, BEDELIA? IT'S FATHER'S DAY AND I WANT MY CAKE. I WANT IT...IT'S MINE...WHERE'S MY FATHER'S DAY CAKE?

AUNT BEDELIA is screaming constantly. Her eyes bulge in terror. She has at this point probably gone totally insane--I know I would be, if it happened to me. She tries to crawl away and NATE comes after her, pulling himself out of his shattered grave. We can see a gaping, dirty wound on top of his head where he was struck by the ashtray.

BEDELIA crawls into the grass, screaming. The corpse lurches after her and one clawlike hand snares her ankle. The thing jerks toward her again, and then its skeletal fingers close around her neck.

23 EXT. THE CORPSE'S FACE, EXTREME CLOSE-UP DAY 23

It is grinning, vindictive, horrible.

NATE (croaking)
I WANT MY CAKE, YOU BITCH...AND I'M GOING TO HAVE IT.

24 INT. THE PARLOR, CLOSE-UP ON THE CLOCK DAY 24

It reads five o'clock, but the SOUND of the chimes is almost inaudible, buried under a flood of loud disco music.

AUNT SYLVIA (v/o)
CASS, TURN THAT DOWN RIGHT NOW!

After a moment the music is turned down and THE CAMERA DRAWS BACK to take in the rest of the room. CASS and HANK come in from the living room, flushed from dancing. CASS looks extremely sexy. RICHARD sits at the table, which has now been laid for dinner, with a glass of wine.

24 CONTINUED 24

AUNT SYLVIA comes in, followed by the housekeeper, MRS. DANVERS.

MRS. DANVERS
Shall I glaze the ham now, ma'am?

AUNT SYLVIA
You'd better wait another five minutes, Mrs. Danvers. She's late. I can't understand it, but I suppose we all get older.

MRS. DANVERS (impassively)
Yes, ma'am.

She leaves.

AUNT SYLVIA goes to the window and looks out at the cemetery. The Lincoln is still parked by the pillars, but there's no sign of life anywhere.

AUNT SYLVIA
I hope she's all right. Perhaps she's fallen asleep. Richard, you had better go out and check.

RICHARD
I don't want to go out there. Place gives me the creeps.

CASS
She's fine, Aunt Sylvia. Probably just got mooning about the good old days and let the time get away from her. Wine, Hank?

HANK
No, thanks. I'll go out and have a look for her if you want, Mrs. Grantham.

SYLVIA
Would you, Henry?

CASS (annoyed)
Oh, Hank, don't be such a bore. Get me a drink.

HANK
I won't be long.

He leaves the room by way of the kitchen. AUNT SYLVIA

24 CONTINUED (2) 24

fixes CASS with a triumphant glance. CASS leaves the room in something of a huff, and in a few moments the SOUND of the disco music begins again, even louder.

RICHARD
Don't you two ever get tired of it, Aunt Sylvia?

AUNT SYLVIA is looking after HANK.

SYLVIA
Such a sweet boy. How will Cass ever stand it, dear Richard?

RICHARD (laughs)
Yeah, she'll be in Reno by Labor Day.

25 EXT. THE GRANTHAM FAMILY CEMETERY DAY, EDGING TO DUSK 25

HANK approaches the Lincoln, looks inside, sees it is empty, and goes into the cemetery. He looks around, a bit uneasy, before walking forward. The place is a bit spooky now. When he does start walking deeper in, his advance is rather tentative.

HANK
Uh...Aunt Bedelia? Miss Grantham? You around?

There is no answer. Faintly, from the house behind him, comes the SOUND of CASS'S disco music. HANK starts to walk forward again, looking around for NATE'S grave. This should be spun out a bit; HANK is looking for the grave, and the audience is undoubtedly waiting for NATE'S rotted corpse to spring out of the high grass or from behind a tombstone at HANK. The director will know what to do with the situation.

After an appropriate length of time--and no attack--HANK finds NATE'S grave, the plot in front of the headstone torn up--and apparently empty. He stares at this, eyes widening, then turns away. He is not exactly running, but he's freaked out, moving fast. He stumbles over something--AUNT BEDELIA'S purse, perhaps, and sprawls full-length.

HANK lands almost nose-to-nose with AUNT BEDELIA'S corpse --her eyes are open, her face purple. Strangled.

HANK utters a cry of horror and scrambles to his feet--directly into the arms of NATE'S corpse. It shakes HANK

25 CONTINUED 25

the way some monstrously strong terrier would shake a rat --and then throws him. HANK lands against a tombstone, and we hear the cracking SOUND of his skull shattering. His eyes are open, and his expression is one of surprise. He might be sitting on a bench somewhere and waiting for a bus.

26 EXT. THE FAMILY GRAVEYARD, WITH NATE DAY/DUSK 26

It is silhouetted against the setting sun like some sort of grotesque scarecrow.

NATE (grunts)
Where's my cake?

Abruptly it turns and begins to shamble toward the house.

27 INT. THE PARLOR DAY/DUSK 27

RICHARD is having another glass of wine. Across from him sits AUNT SYLVIA, also with wine; hers is untouched, and she is tapping impatiently against her glass with the handle of her spoon. The SOUND of disco from the other room.

AUNT SYLVIA glances at the clock. Now it is nearly 5:25.

Abruptly the music shuts off and CASS comes in, put out.

CASS
Where is he?

SYLVIA
My darling, I couldn't say. I would guess he's hobnobbing with Aunt Bedelia. Getting her side of the story, perhaps.

CASS (petulant)
I want him. And I want my dinner. I'm hungry.

RICHARD
Well go get him, then!

CASS
I don't like it out there. It's creepy. And SHE'S creepy, too.

RICHARD
Oh, for Christ's sake.

27 CONTINUED 27

CASS
You go, Richard.

RICHARD
He's your husband. I don't even like him. I think he's a hick.

CASS (furious)
RICHARD!

RICHARD
Well, I do. He's a fucking hick.

SYLVIA (complacently)
Richard, you know I don't approve of such language in my house.

SYLVIA rises.

SYLVIA (continues)
I'll go. Such a sweet boy.

SYLVIA sweeps regally from the room, leaving CASS and RICHARD to glare at each other.

28 INT. THE KITCHEN DUSK 28

The room is creepily similar to the way we saw it in the flashback sequence (14, 17, 20). AUNT SYLVIA enters, speaking.

SYLVIA
Mrs. Danvers, have you seen--

She stops. MRS. DANVERS is not in evidence. The kitchen is deserted.

SYLVIA
Mrs. Danvers...?

No answer. AUNT SYLVIA looks around doubtfully. She crosses to the pantry and opens the door.

SYLVIA
Mrs. Da--

This turns to a shriek as MRS. DANVERS'S body falls out of the pantry, her hands seeming to grab bonelessly at AUNT SYLVIA.

Screaming, AUNT SYLVIA flees across the kitchen to the back door. She opens it and there is NATE, standing

28 CONTINUED 28

there in all his rotting glory. His hands piston out and grab AUNT SYLVIA by the neck.

NATE
WHERE'S MY CAKE? I WANT MY CAKE. IT'S FATHER'S DAY AND I...WANT... MY...CAKE.

SYLVIA utters a choked gargling noise...and the NATE-creature suddenly twists her head all the way around so that SYLVIA'S frozen face and bulging eyes are staring directly into THE CAMERA. This is accompanied by the appropriate SOUND of grinding, snapping bones.

We see only a flash of this before CUTTING TO:

29 INT. THE CLOCK IN THE PARLOR, CLOSE-UP DUSK 29

The clock now reads 5:45.

THE CAMERA PULLS BACK until we see the whole parlor. CASS is pacing back and forth angrily. RICHARD is now drinking wine straight from the bottle, and gives us the impression of having passed through the country of the Merely Tiddly to that of Outer Drunkenness.

CASS glances up at the clock and then explodes.

CASS
Where IS she? And where the hell is Hank?

RICHARD (slyly)
Maybe he and Aunt Sylvia decided to go behind the old family crypt for a quickie.

CASS
You're not funny.

RICHARD
Who's joking?

CASS pauses momentarily. We see by her face that she wouldn't quite put this past AUNT SYLVIA. Then she resumes her pacing.

CASS
Where's Aunt Bedelia?

RICHARD
Why don't you go out there and see? They may still need a fourth for bridge.

29 CONTINUED 29

CASS
Go see. (Wheedles) Please, Richard? PLEASE?

RICHARD (drinking--no, guzzling)
You go find him. He's your hick --husband, I mean.

CASS
I hate you!

30 INT. THE PANTRY DUSK 30

We see a rotting hand reach up to a high shelf and bring down several items; they are cake-decorating tubes.

31 INT. THE PARLOR DUSK 31

CASS is at the window, looking out at AUNT BEDELIA'S Lincoln. RICHARD is at the table, finishing off the bottle of wine. He holds it upended over his mouth catching the last two or three drops. Then he belches.

At the same moment, the parlor clock chimes 6 PM.

CASS turns from the window and approaches RICHARD. The bravado and pique is gone.

CASS
Richard, I'm scared. It's almost dark out there.

RICHARD
Nothing to me. I'm going to get another bottle of wine.

CASS (begging)
PLEASE, Richard!

He gets up and starts toward the kitchen door; CASS goes with him. They get about halfway across the room when the swing door between the parlor and the kitchen swings slowly inward. Shambling out of the dark is NATE'S corpse. We see it only from the waist up in this shot, which should show all three of the players--NATE, CASS, and RICHARD.

CASS utters a piercing shriek and falls back against RICHARD, who stands frozen.

Incredibly, NATE is grinning.

31 CONTINUED 31

NATE
It's Father's Day, and I got my cake. I got my own cake.

NATE raises his hand into the CAMERA'S frame. In it is AUNT SYLVIA'S head, ripped or severed from her body. The eyes stare blindly at CASS and RICHARD. The head has been decorated with loops and swoops and curlicues of frosting.

NATE
Happy Father's Day!

FREEZE FRAME. This FREEZE FRAME becomes a comic picture taking up about half a page; in the panels directly above it, we can see two other panels in sequence; CASS and RICHARD arguing in the parlor, and NATE'S rotting hand grasping the cake-decorating tubes in the pantry.

In the major panel, balloons are coming from the characters' mouths; NATE is saying "It's Father's Day and I got my own cake...Happy Father's Day!" RICHARD is saying "Oh, my Lord!" and CASS is saying "Yaaaahhhh!"

In the background, we hear the SOUND of thunder and rain; lightning flickers blue on the page. The wind gusts, flutters the page, and then flips it over. This new page is comprised entirely of ads; on the left is a full-pager for DAWN OF THE DEAD; on the right is a whole range of novelty gadgets like joy-buzzers, snakes that pop out of fake peanut cans, X-ray tubes with which you can supposedly look through girls' dresses, throw-your-voice gadgets, books on hypnosis, dozens of others. We won't bw able to read them all, but we'll get the idea; this page of ads is headed AMUSE AND AMAZE YOUR FRIENDS!

A skeletal, bony hand reaches into the frame; it also flickers blue in the lightning. Beyond the bony wrist we see the ragged edge of some sort of robe. Perhaps we get the idea that this is the hand of the creature glimpsed through the window in that first scene.

The hand turns the page to the SOUND of a loud crack of thunder.

On the new left-hand page is a so-called "House Ad," defending horror comics; it is headed in glaring black print, WHICH WOULD YOU PREFER FOR YOUR CHILD? Below the head are three comic pictures, side by side. On the extreme left are a number of 12-to15-year-olds shooting dope in a scuzzy basement. On the extreme right is a kid backed up against an alley wall, being menaced by a teen-age gang with switchblades. The center picture shows a

31 CONTINUED (2) 31

happy, contented child sitting at home in his own well-lighted living room, a bowl of munchies near at hand. He is reading an issue of CREEPSHOW. In the background, a decidedly 1950s-ish mom and dad are looking at their son a-provingly.

There will be a lot of other copy with this House Ad that we won't have time to read and won't be interested in anyway (and probably only dedicated movie buffs will bother to read it at all), but at the bottom is a motto in large black letters: REMEMBER, MOM AND DAD! A LAUREL COMIC IS A MORAL COMIC!

On the facing page to the right (and after a moment THE CAMERA WILL MOVE IN on this) is the splash-page of story #2. In this picture we see a farmer in overalls standing on a low ridge of land and looking across a field at night. There's a moon; the sky is splashed with stars. But there's something else up there; a bright light has sketched itself halfway across the night sky, and it is this that the farmer is looking at with a kind of innocent wonder.

The title of this story is THE LONESOME DEATH OF JORDY VERRILL.

As with the first story, the SOUNDS of the thunder and lightning fade, and as THE CAMERA MOVES IN TO CLOSE-UP, the title material fades out. For a moment the comic drawing fills the frame; then it becomes a FREEZE-FRAME; and then it begins to move.

The light in the sky arcs down and strikes the earth just on JORDY VERRILL'S side of the little stream. He follows it with his eyes. For a moment there is an even brighter flare of light, and a thudding SOUND.

JORDY
Holy old Jesus!

He starts to run toward the point of impact.

32 EXT. NEAR THE POINT OF IMPACT NIGHT 32

In the background, the Bluebird Creek, a stream small enough for an agile man to leap over, burbles along. In the immediate foreground there is a small, smoking crater in the field (which is probably a hayfield that has been recently cut). Overhead, the stars in their billions--bright, mysterious.

JORDY comes running up to the crater, panting and out of

32 CONTINUED 32

breath, gogling with excitement. JORDY is about forty-five years old, and he's not a very bright man. He stares into the crater, wide-eyed.

JORDY
Holy old Jesus!

He gets down on his knees to get a better look, and THE CAMERA MOVES IN so we can have a better look, too.

33 EXT. THE CRATER (JORDY'S POV) NIGHT 33

There is a smoking abject in the crater a little bigger than a softball. We may be struck by its regular, spherical appearance, although it is certainly not a metal object. Tendrils of smoke are rising from it.

34 EXT. AT THE CRATER, WITH JORDY NIGHT 34

JORDY
That's a meteor! I'll be dipped in shit if that ain't a meteor! Holy Jesus!

JORDY reaches into his overall pockets, fumbles around in there, and brings out a folding rule. He unfolds perhaps three feet of it and prods the spherical object in the crater with it. Nothing happens. He folds the ruler up again and repockets it. He leans forward, stretches out his hand...closer...closer...he touches it.

JORDY
OWWWWW-SHIT!!

He jerks his hand back and sticks his fingers in his mouth. When he removes them and looks, a number of blisters have already formed on them. Then his gaze is pulled back to the meteor--if that's what it is--and he regards it long and thoughtfully.

JORDY (soft)
Wonder what they'd pay for it up to the college?

CAMERA MOVES IN on JORDY'S dyadreaming face.

35 INT. A LARGE COLLEGE OFFICE DAY 35

The legend on the door reads DEPARTMENT OF METEORS. JORDY is sitting at his ease on one side of the desk, wearing his "store-bought" suit. On the other side of the desk is JORDY'S conception of what a college professor should look

35 CONTINUED 35

like: white coat, monocle in one eye, Lenin haircut, hawklike face.

On the desk between them, in a bucket, is the "meteor."

JORDY
Ayuh, I found it in my field just this side of the Bluebird Creek. It's a meteor, just as sure as shit sticks to a blanket. You can't fool Jordy Verrill! At first I I thought it might be a piece of one of those earth satterlites, like that Skylab. So tell me, doc, how much will you pay?

METEOROLOGIST
Well, it's a damned fine one, Mr. Verrill. I see I can't fool you about that. You're pretty sharp. How does fifty dollars sound?

JORDY
I won't take a cent less than two hundred bucks. So put that in your pipe and smoke it!

The METEOROLOGIST promptly takes out a pipe and begins to stuff it with tobacco.

METEOROLOGIST
Shall we say seventy-five?

JORDY
Not a cent less than two hundred! That's my meteor, and if you want it, you'll have to pay my price, doc. Anita Verrill didn't raise no ijits. Two hundred!

36 EXT. AT THE CRATER, WITH JORDY NIGHT 36

He's staring at the meteor, and he might as well have dollar signs in his eyes.

JORDY (muttering)
Not a cent less than two hundred. Pay off that goddam bank-loan. That's the ticket. My meteor, my price. You're fuckin-A right.

36 CONTINUED 36

JORDY gets to his feet, walks around to the other side of the crater, then walks back again.

JORDY
Got to cool the sumbitch off.
That's the ticket.

JORDY sets off running back the way he came.

37 EXT. JORDY'S DOORYARD NIGHT 37

JORDY is filling a pail (the same one we saw in sc. 35, as a matter of fact) at a faucet-bib on the side of his home place, which is a rambling farmhouse that has seen better days--like around 1940, maybe. The yard is full of disembowelled cars and auto parts. Plastic on the windows. A mighty fine crop of weeds growing. From a tree by the road a sign hangs down, inexpertly painted: CAR REPAIRING MOTORCYCLE REPAIRING CUKES CORN FRESH RAZBERRYS FREE KITTENS.

While the bucket is filling, Jordy looks curiously at his fingers again.

38 EXT. JORDY'S FINGERS, CLOSE-UP NIGHT 38

Blisters all over the first, second, and third fingers.

39 EXT. JORDY'S DOORYARD NIGHT 39

He stops looking at his fingers, twists off the faucet, grabs the bucket, and starts running back toward the field with it, the bucket sloshing water.

40 EXT. JORDY, CLOSE-UP NIGHT 40

He's grinning happily.

41 INT. A BANK LOAN-OFFICER'S OFFICE DAY 41

The LOAN OFFICER looks as mean as the devil himself. JORDY stands opposite him in his "store-bought" suit, looking composed.

LOAN OFFICER
I'm sorry, Mr. Verrill, we simply can't carry your paper any longer. I'm afraid we'll have to--

JORDY
You won't have to.

41 CONTINUED 41

LOAN OFFICER
I beg your pardon?

JORDY
I said you won't have to.

From his pocket he takes a wad of bills thick enough to choke a horse and counts out two hundred dollars. The LOAN OFFICER looks flabbergasted and rather chagrined--all of this is JORDY'S conception, remember.

LOAN OFFICER
Would you mind telling me, Mr. Verrill, where you came by this money?

JORDY
You might say it fell out of the sky.

42 EXT. JORDY'S FIELD, NEAR BLUEBIRD CREEK NIGHT 42

JORDY, still grinning, reaches the crater with his bucket. There is the meteor, still smoking. JORDY stands there, panting, for a moment, and then tosses the whole bucket of water over the meteor.

There is a loud hissing SOUND, followed by a snapping SOUND that is almost like the creak of a breaking branch. Steam obscures the crater. JORDY waits for it to clear, now looking anxious.

When the steam does clear, his look of anxiety becomes one of disgusted horror. The meteor has broken in two pieces. There is a hollow center, we see, and from it a this gray liquid is seeping. It looks like liquified cigarette-smoke...or perhaps semen.

JORDY (groaning)
Oh, you done it now, Jordy Verrill! You LUNKHEAD!

He slaps his forehead.

43 INT. A LARGE COLLEGE OFFICE DAY 43

This is a replay of sc. 35, except JORDY now looks abject; he is almost cowering in his chair and inside his "store-bought" suit. The METEOROLOGIST definitely has the upper hand. In the bucket are the two pieces of meteor.

METEOROLOGIST (snottily)
Two hundred dollars for a BROKEN

43 CONTINUED 43

METEOROLOGIST (continues)
meteor? Mr. Verrill, you must be joking. I wouldn't give you two CENTS.

44 EXT. BY THE CRATER, WITH JORDY NIGHT 44

JORDY (mourning)
Jordy Verrill, you LUNKHEAD! Verrill luck is always in, and you spell that kind of luck B-A-D...well, I got to try.

JORDY takes his bucket and works his way down into the crater. He picks up half of the meteor and drops it into the bucket with a clunking SOUND. He picks up the other half and some of that gray stuff trickles over his blistered fingers.

JORDY grimaces with disgust, drops the second half of the meteor into the bucket, and wipes his blistered fingers on the leg of his biballs.

JORDY (grossed out)
Meteorshit!

He works his way back out of the little crater and looks down into it. The gray stuff is almost gone now; it is seeping into the ground.

He looks down into the bucket.

JORDY (half-heartedly)
Maybe I can glue it together. In the morning.

He starts off, not running or happy now; he moves slowly, shoulders slumped.

As JORDY moves out of the frame, THE CAMERA MOVES IN on the crater. It is still steaming faintly, and there is something ominous about it.

45 EXT. JORDY'S DOORYARD NIGHT 45

He puts the bucket down beside his rickety porch, looks in at the two broken pieces, and whistles disgustedly between his teeth. He mounts the porch. A cat comes out, attempts to twine itself between his legs, and gets a kick for its pains. JORDY goes inside.

46 INT. JORDY'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT 46

Frankly speaking, the place is a cluttery mess. Everything is old except for the Sears color TV that holds the place of honor. A few old plates, with food crusted on, are stacked here and there. We may see ants on them. Three or four cats cruise around. It is obviously not a house that Better Homes and Gardens is going to be interested in during the forseeable future.

JORDY kicks a cat out of his way and turns on the TV. A sitcom comes on, or perhaps it's a Big-Time Wrestling match. JORDY becomes rivited immediately, whatever it is, and during the rest of this scene, he doesn't take his eyes from the TV. He backs toward his chair, a food-stained monstrosity with a flounce hanging down to the carpet. JORDY sits down and, still without taking his eyes from the TV, feels under the flounce with one hand. He brings up a bottle of Ripple wine, unscrews the cap, takes a big drink, and props the bottle against his crotch. Absently, he shakes his hurt fingers a little, then sucks them for awhile. Takes another drink of wine, and continues to watch TV, his troubles forgotten. He's engrossed.

The cats move hither and yon.

47 EXT. THE CRATER NIGHT 47

We can barely see the fresh earth thrown up by the meteor's impact; it has grown over with what looks like fresh, new grass. The crater looks about the way your lawn looks ten days after you seeded it. The grass is thin, but very green and growning nicely.

48 EXT. THE BUCKET BESIDE JORDY'S PORCH NIGHT 48

The bucket is also full of the new grass; it appears to be growing right out of the steel.

49 INT. JORDY'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT 49

JORDY is watching TV intently, bottle of Ripple propped against his crotch, his hands on the arms of his chair.

THE CAMERA MOVES IN on JORDY'S blistered hand, and we see that the blisters have been covered over by that greenish growth--against JORDY'S skin, it looks almost fungoid.

50 INT. JORDY'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT 50

Still watching the old El Tube-o, JORDY grabs his bottle of Ripple with his hurt hand and goes to drink. Just

50 CONTINUED 50

before he gets the neck of the bottle to his mouth, he sees the growth on his fingers.

JORDY screams, and instead of going in his mouth, the wine pours down all over his biballs. He drops the bottle and leaps out of his chair, staring at his fingers with horror.

JORDY
Oh Jesus, oh Jesus Christ on a jumped-up chariot-driven sidecar--

JORDY crosses the room to the telephone in the corner, which sits on a cluttery endtable. As he reaches the phone, he looks at his fingers again and his eyes widen.

JORDY
That meteorshit!

He picks up the telephone and begins to dial rapidly, then pauses.

51 INT. A DOCTOR'S OFFICE DAY 51

JORDY is sitting on the examination table in his pants and a strappy t-shirt. The DOCTOR, who looks every bit as mean as a bear with a weasel biting his ass, is examining the green growth on JORDY'S fingers with a magnifying glass. Abruptly he puts it down, turns, and begins rummaging in a cabinet overhead while JORDY watches his back anxiously.

DOCTOR
I'm sorry, Jordy, but those fingers have to come off.

The DOCTOR turns around. He has a large meat=cleaver in his hand, and he is grinning unpleasantly.

DOCTOR
Just lie down, Jordy...this won't take a minute.

52 INT. JORDY'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT 52

JORDY slams the phone back into his cradle as if it were hot. He looks around indecisively, wondering what to do next. His hand goes to his mouth and he begins biting at his nails. Suddenly he realizes what he is doing, and that expression of horror returns.

JORDY (moaning)
Oh, Jordy, you lunkhead! You been...

53 INT. JORDY'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT 53

This is a partial replay of sc. 46. We see JORDY shaking his fingers, then absently sucking them, then taking another drink of Ripple.

54 INT. JORDY'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT 54

Now JORDY'S horror is extreme. He rushes to a small room adjoining the living room--the bathroom--and THE CAMERA FOLLOWS. He turns on a buzzy fluorescent light, and THE CAMERA looks over his shoulder as JORDY leans toward the toothpaste-spotted mirror and runs out his tongue.

His tongue is furred green with the growing stuff.

JORDY utters a sound that is more scream than moan, and staggers back against the jamb of the bathroom door.

55 EXT. NEAR WHERE THE CRATER WAS NIGHT 55

We know this is where the crater was because of its proximity to Bluebird Creek, but the crater itself is now overgrown with the frasslike growth. It is as high as hay that's ready to be cut; perhaps is would come up to the top of a man's shin. It has begun to spread noticeably in all directions--toward the creek, and back toward the rise where JORDY saw the meteor fall.

56 EXT. JORDY'S DOORYARD NIGHT 56

We can see a little of the bucket, but not much. It's almost covered. Meanwhile, the beaten earth around the bucket has now grown up green. The faucet-bib is festooned with tendrils of the stuff, and it's beginning to grow up the side of the house like ivy.

57 INT. JORDY'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT 57

JORDY is walking around and around the living room, scared and agitated. Behind him, the TV plays on--a newscast, or something. Every now and then he holds up his hand and stares at it, unbelieving. The growth now covers all the fingers.

JORDY
Itches! Gorry, don't it itch! Like the poison ivy I got that time when I went huntin with Richie Corliss and I had to go so bad and I took a crap right in the middle of a patch of it. That's Verrill luck, though, always in. Always bad.

57 CONTINUED 57

Automatically, he's going to his mouth again with that hand. He sees the growth and shoves his hand away from his face with a cry of disgust.

JORDY
That meteorshit! That's what it was!

He goes to the TV and turns it off; we see that the knobs are covered with the greenish growth. With another low cry, JORDY goes back to his chair. The right arm of the easy-chair is likewise now growing.

JORDY
I got to call Doc Geeson! I got to!

He goes to the phone, and we see that the dial is also showing signs of growth.

JORDY (crying out)
Does it grow on EVERYTHING? CHRIST!

Still, he grabs the handset out of its cradle--what else can he do?--and rapidly dials five numbers. We hear the phone ring twice and then it's picked up.

DOCTOR (cheery, canned voice)
Hello! This is Doctor Richard Geeson--

JORDY
Doc! Doc, this is Jordy Verrill out by the Bluebird Creek, and something awful's happened! It--

The voice of DR. GEESON'S Phone-Mate goes right through JORDY'S lines, and he stops, realizing little by little that he's listening to a machine.

DR. GEESON
--and I'm on vacation for the next two weeks, chasing the wily small-mouthed bass in Western Maine. Dr. Peter V. Higgins of Castle Rock will be taking my calls until September 2nd, and you may reach him at his office from 9 AM until 5 PM at 741-8989. That number again is 741-8989. If you have an emergency, either the Northern Cumberland Memorial Hospital in Bridgton or the Stevens Memorial Hospital in Norway--

57 CONTINUED (2) 57

JORDY, who has been listening almost mesmerized, hangs up with a bang. He swallows, and we hear a click in his throat.

JORDY (nearly whispering)
No hospital. When you go in there, you don't come out no more. That's where they take you to die.

He backs away from the phone almost as if it might bite him, and then goes hurriedly out of the room.

58 EXT. JORDY'S SIDE PORCH NIGHT 58

JORDY comes out of the door, moving rapidly. He gets almost to the porch steps when he sees signs of the growth; it is growing over the last quarter of the porch and carpets the steps. That whole section of the dooryard surrounding the bucket is coated with the stuff, growing knee-high where the bucket was; the lower section of the house and outbuildings where the faucet-bib was is likewise coated.

JORDY surveys this for a long time, and then he slowly backs away, toward the door again.

JORDY
No, no, no...

He goes inside.

59 INT. JORDY'S KITCHEN NIGHT 59

JORDY is rummaging furiously through his kitchen cupboard, pulling out canned goods, knocking some of them to the floor; he breaks a bottle of cooking oil. We see only his hands and arms in this scene; his right hand is almost covered with the green, weedlike growth--tendrils of it hang down in places almost like cypress moss--and speckles of it have begun to show up on his other hand, as well.

He reaches far back into the cupboard and comes out with a bottle of Popov Vodka (one of the practicing alky's best friends; anothe well-known one is Thunderbird wine).

JORDY
There you are, you sucker. Knowed you was in there someplace.

JORDY crosses from the cabinets to his old and extremely

59 CONTINUED 59

dirty refrigerator. We still only see his hands and part of his body. He opens the refrigerator door and rummages inside with the hand not holding the vodka. Perhaps he knocks over a bottle of milk.

Near the back of the top shelf, he finds a big Tupperware pitcher of orange juice and pulls it out. Kicks the fridge door shut with one swipe of his knee.

He crosses to the counter by the sink, sets the vodka and orange juice on it, and takes a large glass from the dish-drainer. His movements are jerky, and he spills some of the orange juice as he makes himself a very heavy screwdriver. He sets the bottle and pitcher aside and raises the glass.

60 INT. THE KITCHEN, WITH JORDY NIGHT 60

He drinks, and we see that his lower face is mossed with the green stuff; it is heaviest on and around his lips, but perhaps it isn't as bad as we had feared.

JORDY drains the entire drink and closes his eyes for a moment or two. When he opens them, he appears calmer, more in control of himself.

JORDY
Needed that.

He makes himself another stiff one and drains half of it. Burps.

JORDY
Needed that, too.

He finds a tray and puts the bottle, the pitcher of juice, and the remainder of his second drink on it. CAMERA FOLLOWS as he goes back into the living room and puts the tray on the end-table by his chair. The chair is alive with the growth now, but it is most heavy on the right arm.

JORDY goes to the TV and switches it on. One foot kicks the Ripple bottle, and we see it is full of the stuff. Patches of the carpet are green; the controls of the TV are overhung with the stuff.

As the TV SOUND comes up, JORDY goes back to his chair and stands regarding it for a moment.

JORDY (resentful)
Fuck it. It's my chair, and I'm gonna sit in it.

60 CONTINUED 60

He suits the action to the word, grabs his glass, downs the rest of the screwdriver, and pours himself another. He drinks it, looking at the TV. He has begun to weep; his eyes glisten with his tears, and we see them spilling slowly down his cheeks.

JORDY (very soft)
I'm growin.

61 EXT. BLUEBIRD CREEK LATER THAT NIGHT 61

The moon has gone down.

THE CAMERA PANS SLOWLY along the creek--and as it reaches the point nearest where the crater was, we see that Bluebird Creek is entirely gone, replaced by a boggy, sumpy, squelchy mass of growing green weeds, some of them perhaps nine feet high. They block the stream for perhaps four feet of its course and then the Bluebird re-emerges.

Both banks are coated with the stuff, as far as the eye can see.

62 EXT. THE ROAD NEAR JORDY'S HOUSE NIGHT 62

Part of the two-lane blacktop has also grown over with the weeds.

Note: This shot shows no other houses--only trees--and may serve to reinforce JORDY'S isolation.

63 EXT. JORDY'S DOORYARD NIGHT 63

The growth has also spurted here; the entire dooryard is overgrown, and the side of the house is a shaggy mass of the growing plants. Likewise the porch. Some of the auto parts are almost hidden by the stuff.

64 INT. JORDY'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT 64

On the TV, the Star Spangled Banner is playing.

THE CAMERA PANS SLOWLY across the littered room to JORDY. His arms are green and shaggy with the growth. It is heavier, much heavier around his mouth and chin; like a beard of cypress moss. We also see growths coming down his cheeks in Zig-Zag patterns--to borrow from an old r and b song, the stuff is growing along the tracks of his tears.

JORDY jerks in his chair and opens his eyes...except we

64 CONTINUED 64

see that his right eye is gone. Growing out of it is a mini-forest of green.

JORDY
Ohmigod, what a dr--

Abruptly he remembers. He throws himself out of the chair and runs for the bathroom. We hear him scream.

65 INT. THE TUB IN THE BATHROOM NIGHT 65

JORDY'S green hands come into the frame and turn both taps on full; a moment later he slams the plug into the drain and the tub begins to fill. We hear the SOUND of his harsh, tortured breathing.

66 INT. THE BATHROOM NIGHT 66

JORDY is tearing his shirt off, exposing his chest, which is also green and shaggy with the growth. In the background, the SOUND of the tub is filling with water.

In the mirror over the washbasin, we see a grizzled old man suddenly come into view. He stands watching as JORDY bends to shuck his pants. As he does this, JORDY'S eyes widen with fresh horror.

JORDY
Not there...please, God, not there...

DAD
Jordy.

JORDY registers extreme fright. He turns around and stares at the old man.

JORDY
Dad?...But you're dead! You been dead...Christ, three years, almost!

DAD
I'm not really here at all, Jordy. I'm just in your mind.

JORDY
Daddy, what do you want?

DAD
You ain't going to get into that tub, are you?

JORDY (whining)
Daddy...it itches...it itches all over me...I got to cool off.

66 CONTINUED 66

DAD
No. It's the water that it wants. Don't you know that?

JORDY
It's ten thousand times worse'n that poison ivy, daddy...I can't stand it, I'll go crazy!

DAD
You get into that water, Jordy, you might as well be signing your death-warrant.

JORDY (whispering)
It don't matter. I'm a goner anyway. Ain't I, daddy?

THE CAMERA MOVES IN on JORDY'S tortured face until DAD is no longer in the frame.

JORDY (in agony)
I'm gone, ain't I dad? The stuff outta that meteor got me and I'm gone, ain't I? Ain't I?

He opens his eye--his one good eye, rather--and looks around.

67 INT. THE BATHROOM, WITH JORDY--A NEW SHOT NIGHT 67

Dad is gone.

JORDY
Daddy...?

After a moment he turns to the tub and turns off the taps. He is naked, although we only see him from the waist up. That is bad enough.

JORDY looks at the water, fascinated. We see the war of emotions on his face. At last the attraction of the water is more than he can stand; the possibility of assuaging the itch even for awhile it too attractive. With an inarticulate scream, JORDY plunges in. SOUNDS of frantic splashing and paddling.

JORDY (loud)
Oh, better!...Better!...Better!

68 INT. THE LIVING ROOM NIGHT 68

SOUNDS of the paddling and splashing are muted. Green

68 CONTINUED 68

stuff growing everywhere; hanging off the TV in runners. On the TV, nothing but the snow.

68A EXT. NEAR BLUEBIRD CREEK SUNRISE 68A

The growth is everywhere, as far as the eye can see.

69 EXT. JORDY'S DOORYARD SUNRISE 69

Ditto. The house rises out of the greenery like a forgotten monument.

70 INT. JORDY'S BEDROOM (SECOND FLOOR) SUNRISE 70

The room is empty, but THE CAMERA LINGERS BRIEFLY. It is the messy, slipshod room of a long-time bachelor who has no women. The bedclothes have been thrown back. Green weeds are growing on the sheets, on the pillows, on the threadbare rug. The Popov Vodka bottle, empty and overturned near the door, is also growing.

THE CAMERA MOVES OUT THROUGH THE DOOR AND DOWN THE HALL. There is a trail of weeds leading to the stairs. About halfway there is the Tupperware orange juice pitcher, and here the weeds are quite a bit higher. At the head of the stairs, where you would turn hard right to go down, is a circular Judas-window, and the new daylight is almost obscured by the growing weeds. Faintly, we hear SOUNDS that might be human sobbing.

THE CAMERA DESCENDS THE STAIRS. Weeds are growing out of them. At the bottom is a short hall, and THE CAMERA MOVES FORWARD. At the end of the hall, the living room. It is a jungle. We can barely make out the furniture that was here before; it is nearly overgrown. Stuff hangs down from the ceiling; it's just everywhere.

The sobbing SOUNDS are louder.

THE CAMERA MOVES FORWARD, pushing through the growth the way a jungle explorer would move through heavy underbrush. JORDY begins to speak from the kitchen (where we're moving), but his voice is barely human; it is slobbery and strange.

JORDY
Please, please...please, God, let my luck be in. Just this once.

THE CAMERA ENTERS THE KITCHEN.

71 INT. JORDY'S KITCHEN SUNRISE 71

In the foreground, we see a rifle; then we see what were JORDY'S hands trying desperately to manipulate the slide. They really are not hands at all, but flapping, overgrown green growths.

The slide closes with a heavy clicking SOUND. The rifle leaves the frame. We see only the stove; greenery is sprouting briskly from all four burners.

JORDY (v/o)
Please, God...just this once.

A long silence. Then a single loud gunshot SOUND.

Followed by the SOUND of a thud.

72 EXT. JORDY'S FIELD--A LONG SHOT SUNRISE 72

The creek is gone. The field is gone. Everywhere there is nothing but an expanse of growing greenery.

73 EXT. A ROAD JUNCTION SHORTLY AFTER SUNRISE 73

This is the junction of a dirt road, presumably leading back to JORDY'S house, and Route 26. The weeds from space are growing from the dirt over the tar. In the foreground on Route 26 is a sign: CASTLE ROCK 5 PORTLAND 37 BOSTON 188.

THE CAMERA MOVES IN on BOSTON 188 and HOLDS THERE FOR A MOMENT.

DISSOLVES TO:

74 INT. JORDY'S KITCHEN DAY 74

Some time has passed, because the kitchen is now nearly as overgrown as the living room was. The stove is barely visible. Weeds fill the sink; they're growing aver the dish drainer, the cupboards, etc.

CAMERA PANS DOWN to the barrel of the rifle; even this is beginning to sprout.

CAMERA MOVES UP THE RIFLE BARREL to the trigger. A clump of weeds appears to be gripping it. Now THE CAMERA MOVES BACK and we see a huge hulk of weeds lying on the floor. It has a vaguely manlike shape, but that's all. From one side of the thing's head, one blue eye stares into THE CAMERA in an extremity of glazed horror.

FREEZE FRAME. This FREEZE FRAME, as in sc. 31, becomes a comic picture taking up about half a page, and in the

74 CONTINUED 74

panels directly above it, we see the two foregoing scenes: JORDY'S overgrown field in one, and the weeds reaching the road-junction with the mileage sign in the other.

The caption for the final picture should read: "You can decide for yourself if Jordy Verrill finally had a piece of GOOD luck when he managed to pull that trigger--but don't think too long, kiddies...our next Fable of Fear awaits!"

SOUND of thunder and rain in the background again as THE CAMERA DRAWS BACK. On the facing page this time is another "House Ad," this one purveying subscriptions to CREEPSHOW and back issues of the same.

The wind flips another page, and on these two new pages, we see the third story beginning. THE CAMERA MOVES IN on the splash-page. This one shows a man in work-fatigues with a large keyring on his belt glancing up in the air at a coin he is preparing to catch. A large push-broom rests against the wall. Behind him, we see stairs going up, and beneath them is a dark space that a man would have to crawl into or sort of duck-walk into ...if he wanted to get in there at all. Beyond the stairs, a hallway lit by old-fashioned globe-type lights leads away. Overall, we get an impression of gloom and solitude.

The title of this story is THE CRATE.

As with the others, the SOUNDS of the storm fade as THE CAMERA MOVES IN on the splash-page, and the printed matter fades out, leaving at first the comic drawing...then a FREEZE-FRAME that comes to life.

The coin which the JANITOR has flipped rises in the air, perhaps catching a gleam of light from the hanging globes in the hallway. It comes back down, and he fumbles the catch. The coin strikes the floor with a tinging SOUND ...and rolls under the stairs. The JANITOR takes one grab at it and misses.

JANITOR (disgusted)
There, look at that. Fuckadidle.

He just stands there for a minute, obviously not wanting to go into that space under the stairs. Then he gets his pushbroom, uses the business-end of it to sweep away the cobwebs that have overgrown the triangular space, and leans it back against the wall.

He crawls underneath, out of sight. For a moment there is silence. Then:

74 CONTINUED (2) 74

JANITOR (voice)
What the hell?...CHRIST!

He crawls back out, looking decidedly dirty and cobwebby. He looks back underneath. There is an expression of some excitement on his face.

JANITOR
Guess I got to call Perfesser Bradley. Yeah, that's what I got to do.

The JANITOR hurries up the stairs. THE CAMERA lingers for awhile on that triangular, rather sinister hole.

75 EXT. SOMEONE'S BACK LAWN, WITH WILMA NORTHRUP DAY 75

CAMERA IS CLOSE-UP on WILMA--not a very lovely sight. She is laughing (or perhaps braying would be a better word), her mouth wide-open, exposing all 900 of her pirhana teeth.

CAMERA DRAWS BACK A LITTLE and we see she's holding a drink in a plastic cup. There is a lawn-party in progress, maybe forty or fifty people all told. We see a simmering barbecue.

Standing with WILMA is HENRY NORTHRUP, her husband, a man of about forty who looks both distinguished and henpecked. Completing the trio is DEXTER BRADLEY, a bespectacled, rather hadsome man perhaps five years older than HENRY.

Several people have glanced over at the trio at the sound of WILMA'S harsh laugh. HENRY and DEXTER notice and shrink a little. WILMA is oblivious. She is wearing screaming yellow stretch pants and a loathesome green blouse. Can we get Liz Taylor to reprise her role in WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF? She would be perfect as WILMA, who is the apotheosis of the high-riding, ball-cutting, one hundred per cent, dyed-in-the-wool bitch.

She's also well on her way to being shitfaced.

WILMA
Oh, Dexter, you are such a CHILD. You and Henry both, such CHILDREN. But at least Henry has me to take care of him...don't you, dear?

HENRY (resigned)
Yes, Billie.

75 CONTINUED 75

The HOST comes over with a YOUNG COUPLE. The YOUNG COUPLE has that look about them of people who are new--a little hesitant, a little wary.

HOST (to the YOUNG COUPLE)
Richard? Tabby? I'd like to introduce you to Dexter Stanley, who's professor emeritus in our Zoology Department. Dex, this is Richard and Tabby Raymond. Richard is new in the math department.

DEX (with charm)
How nice to meet you both. What a lovely name you have, Mrs. Raymond.

MRS. RAYMOND (shyly)
Actually, it's Tabitha.

RAYMOND (shakes)
Very pleased, Professor Stanley.

DEX
Just Dex will do it.

RAYMOND
Dex.

HOST
And this is Henry and Wilma Northrup, in the English De--

WILMA (shrill; brash)
Just call me Billie, everyone does.

TABITHA RAYMOND recoils a little; herhusband blinks; HENRY NORTHRUP looks actively pained, and the HOST also shows a moment of strain. WILMA continues, oblivious.

WILMA (continues)
If you need someone to show you the ropes, hon, you come see me. I know the best stores. You buying or renting?

MRS. RAYMOND
Renting right now, but...

WILMA
That's all for the best, honey. Buying real estate in a college town is a frigging pain in the ass. You take my word for it.

75 CONTINUED (2) 75

There is a moment of awkward silence.

HOST (gamely)
Henry's in the English Department, and Wilma is--

WILMA
Oh, I just take care of Henry. Believe me, he needs it! Did you ever meet a man who didn't? What's the matter with you two? You're not drinking!

RAYMOND
Well, actually, we just got h--

WILMA
We can fix that! You have to lube the machine, that's what I always tell Henry. You come on with me. You just stay put until I get back, Henry.

She draws the RAYMONDS away, a little against their will; she's chattering a mile a minute. The HOST looks after her with real distaste for a moment, and then follows them. Both HENRY and DEX have seen this expression, and we know that WILMA NORTHRUP is an old hand at playing the role of the Party Monster.

HENRY (bitterly)
Chalk up another kill for Billie. The Red Baron pales into insignificance compared to her.

DEX (awkwardly)
Hey, come on...it's not that bad.

HENRY
No?

DEX does not reply. He's a fundamentally honest man, and we can see that it is, indeed, pretty bad. HENRY drains his drink and looks at the cubes reflectively.

HENRY
Think I'll go and get another. Maybe another five or six. Or eight or ten.

DEX
Don't have too many, Dex. It's chess night.

75 CONTINUED (3) 75

HENRY brightens a little at this.

HENRY
Chess, right. Well, that's some-
thing. It's also Wilma's night out.

From across the lawn, near the barbecue, comes WILMA'S harsh tone, telling someone:

WILMA
Just call me Billie! Everyone does!

HENRY (quietly)
How I've grown to hate her, Dex.

DEX
Henry, you don't--

A MAID has approached during this last exchange, and she now breaks in.

MAID
Pardon--would one of you be Professor
Bradley?

DEX
I am.

MAID
There's a telephone call for you.

DEX
All right. Thank you. (To HENRY)
It's probably Charlie Gereson with
his damned ear-mites again. He's
determined he's going to win a
Nobel before he's twenty-four.
He might just do it.

HENRY
Grad student?

DEX
Yeah.

HENRY
He really must be after the Nobel
if he's working at Amberson Hall
during August.

DEX
He's downstairs. It's cool.
Excuse me, Henry.

75 CONTINUED (4) 75

HENRY
Of course.

DEX walks toward the house; HENRY watches him go, and then is distracted by the harsh, cawing laughter of his wife from the patio. He glances toward her and winces at what he sees; WILMA in the midst of a group of people, apparently holding the RAYMONDS by main force, one of her hands on each RAYMOND'S arm.

HENRY squeezes his plastic drink glass so hard in his hand that it shatters. There is some blood. After a moment he takes out his handkerchief and mops at it.

76 INT. THE STUDY OF THE HOST'S HOUSE DAY 76

DEX is on the phone. Behind him is a window through which we can see the lawn-party continuing. WILMA NORTHRUP is very much in evidence. HENRY is walking toward the bar that has been set up to one side of the barbecue.

JANITOR (voice)
--so I thought I ought to call you, anyway, see what you thought, Professor Bradley.

DEX
That's fine. Who told you I was here? Charlie Gereson?

JANITOR
Yeah. I sent him out for a hamburger, doc. Just about twisted his arm. I swear that kid don't know if it's day or night once he gets going.

DEX
I quite agree. And I thank you for your interest, but I'd almost be willing to guess that crate's full of National Geographics or Zoological Reviews...or back issues of the Reader's Digest.

JANITOR (doubtfully)
The date on it said 1834. Did they publish the Reader's Digest way back then, Professor Bradley?

DEX'S eyebrows go up at this intelligence.

DEX
1834? Really?

76 CONTINUED 76

JANITOR
Yeah! It's stencilled right on the side. I had to wipe off the dust so I could read it. It says June 19, 1834, and then something about Arctic Expedition.

DEX is really interested for the first time.

DEX
Arctic Expedition!

JANITOR
Yeah, and I didn't even think anybody got up there until about 1912, or something.

DEX
Well, maybe there's something more interesting in your crate than National Geographics after all, Mike. I'll check it first thing on Monday.

JANITOR (disappointed)
Oh. That's my day off.

During this, DEX has been turning casually to the window. Looking out, he sees the lawn-party tableau: WILMA making a loud, obnoxious ass of herself, HENRY watching from the bar, where he is apparently trying out for the U.S. Drinking Team. HENRY still holds the handkerchief on his cut palm. DEX'S face reflects his distress.

DEX
Well, you know, maybe I could get up this afternoon. It's a pretty dull party.

JANITOR (delighted)
Say, that'd be great! You know, my buddy Tommy, he's over in the Geology Department, he says there's all kinds of stuff tucked away on an old campus like this! Why just last year they found--

DEX is still looking out at HENRY, and his face is sad.

77 INT. AMBERSON HALL DAY 77

This is a big, old-fashioned building, gothic in style. It's shadowy inside. DEX and the JANITOR are walking

77 CONTINUED 77

down the main hall. Behind them, the tall double doors have been wedged open to let in hot summer sunlight. SOUND of echoing footfalls in the stillness.

JANITOR
--and when they moved the President into his new house over by the mall, they found all KINDS of stuff in the attic of the old one. Why, they found stuff that went back two, three hundred years. They found this one gadget, something called a gasogene, that hardly anybody knew what it was--

DEX (easily)
Ancestor of the modern bottle of tonic water or mixer. First there was the gasogene, then the soda syphon, now bottled mixers.

JANITOR (admiringly)
Yeah! That's just what it was! And somebody said it might be worth a thousand bucks! There's all kinds of old stuff around, ain't there?

They reach the stairway leading down to the basement level. To the right is a large lecture hall with its double doors propped open, and DEX glances in. There's a scaffolding on one wall and a paint-spattered canvas dropcloth on the floor.

JANITOR
Ain't the smell of that paint wicked in this heat?

They start down.

78 INT. AT THE FOOT OF THE STAIRS DAY 78

CAMERA is looking up as DEX and the JANITOR descend.

DEX
Your friend is right, Mike--there are all kinds of peculiar things around an old campus. Just last year we found an antique gerbil-run up on the fourth floor... lovely glass panels...probably worth ten times as much as your friend's gasogene. It's in the

78 CONTINUED 78

DEX (continues)
Museum of Natural History now. But I'm still betting your crate's full of magazines, or just plain junk. (More to himself) Still... that Artic Expedition business... and the date...

JANITOR
Kinda gets you, doesn't it?

DEX looks at him, then smiles.

DEX
Yeah. It kinda does.

During all of this, they have reached the bottom of the stairs and gone around to the triangular space going underneath the stairs. DEX squats, but can see nothing in the gloom.

DEX
You didn't open it?

JANITOR
No, I figured that was for you. It's been nailed shut, anyway.

DEX
Why didn't you tell Charlie Gereson? He was here.

JANITOR
Well...he's just a grad student. And with Professor Hunting over there in England, I figure you're the boss.

DEX
Charlie's not back yet?

JANITOR
No, I guess maybe he met his girl over there at the Lion House.

DEX (peering)
Can't see much. You got a flash?

JANITOR
Yeah, just a second.

The JANITOR walks off. DEX peers under the stairs, then

78 CONTINUED (2) 78

makes as if to go under. The hanging cobwebs dissuade him. He recoils from them with a grimace of disgust, and brushes them away with his hand.

The JANITOR returns with a four-cell flashlight and hands it to DEX.

JANITOR
This'll show it up.

DEX turns it on and shines it into the crawlspace under the stairs.

79 INT. THE CRATE UNDER THE STAIRS DAY 79

Might as well be night under here. The flashlight beam wanders aimlessly, then centers on an old-fashioned wooden crate pushed back against the far wall. Overhead, we can see the stairs slanting up in a zigzag pattern. Everything is dusty, cobwebby--AGED.

The crate is thickly coated with dust, but we can see stencilling in a fan-shape where the JANITOR has brushed a lot of it aside. Top line: SHIP TO HORLICKS UNIVER
Second line: VIA JULIA CARPENTER
Third line: ARCTIC EXPEDITION
Bottom line: JUNE 19, 1834

DEX (voice)
What were you doing under there, anyway?

80 INT. THE BASEMENT DAY 80

The JANITOR looks slightly embarrassed. Dex is gazing at him curiously.

JANITOR
I flipped a quarter tryin to decide if I should buff the second-floor hallway first or wash the lab windows. Only I missed it when it came down and it rolled under there. I prob'ly would have let it go, but that was my only quarter for the Coke machine.

DEX starts to duck-walk under the stairway's eve, approaching the crate. He recoils again, brushing down more hanging spider-webs, this time using the body of the flashlight. The beam bobs crazily on the underside of the stairs.

80 CONTINUED 80

JANITOR (sympathetically)
Not very nice under there, is it? God, I hate tight places.

No reply from DEX. He has reached the crate, and he removes his handkerchief from his back pocket to dust it off. Dust rises, thick and choking--motes donce in the light. DEX coughs and waves the dust away from his face.

JANITOR
You okay, Professor Bradley?

DEX
Fine. Help me get this out. I think we might really have something here.

81 INT. LOOKING UNDER THE STAIRS FROM THE HALL DAY 81

The two of them gradually manage to get the crate out, sliding first one end forward, then the other. SOUND of them grunting and panting with exertion; it is clear that whatever is in the crate, it's very heavy. At last, with a final burst of effort, they get it out into the hallway. The JANITOR sits by one end, DEX by the other. Both are breathing hard, and for a moment they don't speak.

In this light we see that the crate is really a well-made box, the boards fitting tight to one another with no space in between. It's more like a wooden safe.

DEX brushes cobwebs out of his hair with a grimace.

JANITOR
That's a well-made crate, doc. My grandfather used to make them like this. (He points) Except that his weren't pegged together, like this one is. That was a little before his time.

DEX leans over and sees that the crate is indeed pegged together instead of nailed up. Then he gets to his feet.

DEX
Give me a hand.

JANITOR
Where we takin it, doc?

DEX
Down to the main lab.

82 INT. THE BASEMENT LAB DAY 82

This is a long, old-fashioned laboratory with white-tiled walls. At the far end is an old-fashioned slate blackboard covered with signs and equations; on one wall an old chart showing all the phyla of creation hangs down.

Most of the desk/tables are deserted, but on one is a litter of books, papers, old styrofoam coffee containers, a Texas Instruments calculator, and a glass aquarium full of little bugs. This is where CHARLIE GERESON has been working.

DEX and the JANITOR come in, each on one end of the crate. It's plenty heavy. The JANITOR is red-faced, puffing and blowing. They get it over to one of the unoccupied tables.

DEX (grunting)
Put it here.

JANITOR
Thank Christ!

They toss it up onto the table. DEX leans back, breathing heavily, but the JANITOR goes on looking at the crate. He's frowning, puzzled, his head slightly cocked to one side. After a moment, DEX notices.

DEX
What's wrong?

JANITOR
Felt like something moved in there when we put it up on the table. Did you feel it?

DEX (laughing)
No. If there ever were living specimens in there, I doubt if they're feeling very lively after a hundred and forty-six years.

JANITOR
Sure. But it felt like something SHIFTED. I guess I been spendin too much time in the hot sun, huh, doc?

DEX
I guess so. Let's get this open.

JANITOR (excited)
Sure! I got a hammer and chisel right upstairs in my closet. Just wait while I go get em!

82 CONTINUED 82

DEX watches him go, rather amused by his scientific excitement, we feel. We hear the SOUND of the JANITOR'S footfalls receding in the hall, then climbing the stairs.

DEX looks at the crate a moment longer, perhaps runs his hand over it, and then walks over to the litter of CHARLIE GERESON'S papers. The crate is still in the foreground, but DEX is across the room, his back turned to the crate.

A light chittering SOUND comes from the crate--light, hard to hear, but rather ugly and unpleasant. It begins to move, just slightly. DEX sees none of this.

83 INT. THE FOYER OF A NICE FACULTY HOME LATE DAY 83

HENRY and WILMA NORTHRUP are in the foyer. WILMA is preparing to go out, and she's obviously drunk. She's also reading HENRY the riot act.

WILMA
...and don't leave the pans just soaking like you did last time, Henry. SCRUB them. Just because you and your intellectual friend are going to play chess doesn't mean you have to leave a mess for me. Pick up after yourself a little. Wipe the stove.

HENRY (passionately)
Yes, Billie.

WILMA
And kindly have him out of here before my classes are over. Frankly, that tobacco he smokes makes me want to RALPH.

HENRY
Yes, Billie.

WILMA (brightly vicious)
"Yes, Billie, yes, Billie!" (Relenting) Dear Henry...what would you do without me?

HENRY
I don't know, Billie.

WILMA
Well, on that we're even, Henry... because I don't know, either. Enjoy your chess.

83 CONTINUED 83

She goes out and crosses the lawn to a car parked at the curb, weaving slightly. Gets in, races the motor, drives off.

HENRY (soft)
Do me a favor, Wilma. Have a few more on the way in. Kill yourself. You bitch.

He closes the door and goes back down the hall.

84 INT. HENRY'S STUDY LATE DAY 84

This is a peaceful, masculine room untouched by WILMA'S giddy, vicious, eccentric whirl. SOUND of a ticking clock--slow, soothing. There is a chessboard set up on a nice small table by the window, and HENRY is just finishing up arranging the chess pieces.

He gets up, goes to the dresser which serves as a bar, opens one of the lower cupboards, and takes out a decanter of whiskey. For the first time, HENRY himself looks serene, at peace. He sets out two nice glasses, one to either side of the whiskey decanter. All of this has the feeling of a much-loved ritual.

He glances at the clock. It is quarter to five.

85 INT. A WRISTWATCH LATE DAY 85

The wristwatch reads quarter to five, also.

THE CAMERA MOVES BACK and we see DEX, standing by the lab table the crate is on.

THE JANITOR comes in with a heavy hammer and a medium-long chisel and joins DEX, who reaches for the tools.

JANITOR (hopefully)
Let me do this for you, Professor Bradley?

DEX hesitates a moment, sees how hopeful and excited the JANITOR is, and nods with a little smile.

DEX
Be my guest, Mike. It's your find.

The JANITOR slips the chisel under one of the top boards, prepares to strike it with the hammer, then glances at DEX again.

85 CONTINUED 85

JANITOR
Probably nothin in here but a bunch of rocks and plants so old they'll turn to dust if you touch em. But I'm pretty hot to see, just the same.

DEX
To tell you the truth, so am I.

They grin at each other, and the JANITOR goes to work on the first board. SOUND of the hammer, very loud.

86 INT. UTTER DARKNESS 86

SOUND of the hammer and chisel, MAGNIFIED. We are inside the crate. Suddenly two large green eyes with slit pupils open in the dark. They look ugly, crazed...and furious.

87 INT. THE BASEMENT LAB LATE DAY 87

The JANITOR continues working the hammer and chisel. It would be nice to keep the audience on pins and needles for as long as possible during this; the director will know how better than I do.

At last the first board comes loose at the JANITOR'S end. As it comes up, DEX reaches across the crate and pulls it up, snapping it off the other end. He puts it on a lab table behind him.

JANITOR (peering in)
Can't see a friggin thing. Where'd I leave my flashlight, doc, you remember?

DEX
Never mind. Go on and peel it.

JANITOR
Okay.

He goes to work on the second board. Wham! Wham! Wham! At last it comes up; the JANITOR pushes it. DEX grabs it and breaks it off as he did the first board and puts it on the lab table.

The JANITOR likewise loosens the third board, and DEX puts it on the lab table. The JANITOR is sweating a bit now, and both of them look pretty excited.

The JANITOR begins on the fourth board, and then stops.

87 CONTINUED 87

A very low whistling SOUND is coming from the crate.

JANITOR
You hear that?

DEX
What?

JANITOR
That whistling.

DEX
I don't--

But he does. The whistling SOUND is a lot louder now--like a teakettle reaching the rolling boil.

The JANITOR leans over the box, peers in.

JANITOR (excited)
Somethin in there, doc! Somethin shiny! Christ, looks like a coupla emeralds--!

Abruptly the JANITOR reaches in, and then things happen fast.

DEX (sudden alarm)
Don't--

The whistling SOUND stops and there is a sudden furious growling SOUND; the thing in the crate seems almost to be jabbering. It ends with a hoarse snarl and a chomping SOUND. The crate suddenly moves and becomes lodged against an instrument mount.

The JANITOR'S arm is suddenly yanked into the crate and he screams.

JANITOR
HELP ME! OH HELP ME DOC IT'S GOT ME IT'S BITING MEEEE--

DEX runs around the table to the JANITOR; inside the crate, the thing goes on snarling and jabbering. The JANITOR gives a mammoth tug and part of his arm--about down to the elbow--comes out of the crate and we see his shirt is bloody and savagely tattered by bite-marks. He is bleeding profusely, and screaming.

Abruptly the thing in the crate yanks him back down in to the shoulder. We hear a snapping SOUND that must be a breaking bone, and droplets of blood spray out of the crate as the JANITOR shrieks.

87 CONTINUED (2) 87

JANITOR
OH DEAR CHRIST GET ME OUT IT'S BITING ME OH GOD THAT HURTS--IT HURTS--IT HURRRRRRR--

DEX grabs the JANITOR by the other arm and pulls with all his might. No result at all. The thing in the crate has got a mighty good hold on the JANITOR. DEX, at this point, is bullshit with fear and panic.

DEX
Hold on--now!

DEX gives a tremendous tug. For amoment part of the JANITOR'S upper arm comes out, and we see something on it. Fur. Eyes. Whatever it is, it's savaging the JANITOR'S arm. Then it's pulled back down again.

SOUNDS: Snarling, gobbling, a sort of breathless whistle in between.

DEX tugs fruitlessly at the JANITOR'S arm. Blood has spattered the lab table. The JANITOR screams again, and then his eyes roll up and hw sags backward, held up only by the thing in the crate, which has his arm.

The JANITOR is yanked toward the crate, and as his head falls against it, the thing leaps up again--we may see claws, but it will be too fast to get a really good look at it--and rips his throat open. Blood flies everywhere in a spray: on the table, in the sink inset into the table, onto the white'tiled wall.

DEX blunders backwards, hands clapped to his cheeks, eyes bulging.

The thing is drawing the JANITOR into the crate, little by little; his feet now dangle off the floor. Inside the crate, the thing raves and chomps, whistling occasionally. There is a snapping SOUND as the JANITOR'S neck, leaning against the boards of the crate not yet taken off, breaks. His head is pulled inside. The rest of his body dangles at a grotesque angle.

DEX
He's dead. Oh Jesus.

The remainder of the body (we can no longer see the head) begins to rock back and forth, the feet swaying...as if dancing.

DEX backs away, strikes the edge of the table where CHARLIE GERESON'S stuff is littered, and panics. He runs.

87 CONTINUED (3) 87

The crate lurches again, and one of the JANITOR'S shoulders disappears inside. The SOUNDS from the crate continue.

88 INT. THE BASEMENT HALLWAY LATE DAY 88

DEX runs down the hall and THE CAMERA FOLLOWS. He runs up the stairs, falls, gets up again, and runs the rest of the way to the top.

89 INT. THE ENTRANCE TO THE BUILDING, UPPER HALLWAY LATE DAY 89

CHARLIE GERESON, a young man of about twenty-three, comes in through the double doors that have been chocked open. He's slim, wearing an open-throated white shirt. Drinking a milkshake through a straw.

He starts down the hall and DEX runs right into him, upsetting the milkshake, spilling it on both of them. DEX almost claws at CHARLIE. He is in a fever of panic.

CHARLIE
Professor Bradley! What--what--

DEX
Charlie...my boy...the janitor... the crate...it whistles...IT WHISTLES WHEN IT'S HUNGRY...WHEN IT'S ANGRY...my boy...we have to... campus security...we...we...

CHARLIE
Slow down, Professor Bradley! Slow down, I don't know what you're talking about!

DEX makes a conscious effort to get hold of himself and speak rationally.

DEX
Charlie...listen. The janitor. You know Mike, the janitor?

CHARLIE
Yes, of course I do.

DEX
Well, he found a crate this afternoon. How he found it is not important, but he did. I was at a cocktail party, and my...my housekeeper told him where I was when he called my home--

90 EXT. THE CAMPUS OF HORLICKS UNIVERSITY SUNSET 90

The campus looks eerily deserted in this August lull. The sun hangs over the horizon like a red, infected wound.

91 INT. THE UPPER HALLWAY SUNSET 91

DEX and CHARLIE are now standing at the head of the stairs leading down to the basement level. The light has faded appreciably. To their right, we see the lecture hall, the painter's scaffold, and the canvas dropcloth beneath it.

DEX
--and it...it just sucked him in. We have to get the campus police, Charlie. We have to get SOMEBODY.

A little silence ensues. CHARLIE is trying to figure out how to respond to this. DEX, still scared out of his wits but perhaps realizing how crazy it all sounds, is looking at his grad student pleadingly.

CHARLIE (a bit lame)
That's...pretty far-out, Professor Bradley.

DEX
It's true! I swear before God as my maker that it's true, Charlie ...my boy...we've got to get campus security over here. We've got to...

DEX is not interupted; he simply trails off, looking at CHARLIE with that pleading expression. There is a pause ...a long one, and maybe we sense that DEX'S very sanity depends on how CHARLIE will respond.

CHARLIE (crisp)
No, campus security's no good. One of them would stick his hand in that crate first thing. If I'm having trouble swallowing this, what the fuck are they going to think?

DEX'S expression is one of great relief--in spite of CHARLIE'S CAVEAT, at least he has been believed...and that means a great deal.

DEX
I don't know what they'd think. I...I...

91 CONTINUED 91

CHARLIE
They'd think you'd been off on a helluva toot--no, they'd think we'd BOTH been off on a helluva toot, and got seeing Tasmanian devils instead of pink elephants. Besides, from what you say, the responsibility has been with the Zo Department all along...even if it has been a hundred and forty years. I think we ought to go down and see how the land lies before we do anything else.

DEX
But...(Long pause)...It may be out.

CHARLIE (glibly)
Oh, I doubt that.

He doesn't believe a word DEX has said, and DEX suddenly realizes it.

DEX
Charlie...please...

CHARLIE (large false smile)
Just a quick check. To see how the land lays.

CHARLIE starts down the dark stairs.

DEX (terror)
CHARLIE, PLEASE! DON'T GO DOWN THERE!

CHARLIE
Just stay up there, Professor Bradley ...I'll be right back.

CHARLIE disappears. We hear the SOUND of his footfalls moving off down the lower corridor toward the lab. DEX stands trembling at the head of the stairs, pitiably reduced from the pleasant man we saw at the cocktail party by his fear.

DEX (to himself)
He'll see it...he'll see the crate ...he'll see Mike...the blood... and then he'll...believe me. (Louder) Charlie? (No answer) CHARLIE?

He stands at the top of the stairs for a beat, listening, and then, reluctantly, starts down them.

92 INT. THE LAB, CLOSE-UP ON CHARLIE'S FACE EVENING 92

CHARLIE'S face is stunned and horrified--he is totally different in aspect from the man we saw in the upstairs hall. His mouth is trembling, his eyes almost as big as serving platters.

As THE CAMERA DRAWS BACK, we see why. The table where the crate was is now vacant, but there is blood everywhere. It is splattered on the table, on the white tile wall, it's running down the legs of the table.

CHARLIE begins to back away, and arms reach abruptly into the frame and grab him. It's DEX. CHARLIE recoils from him, and in that recoil, we can see all we need to of the scenario as it has played out in CHARLIE'S mind.

DEX (harshly)
There! You see the blood! Do you think I'm crazy now?

CHARLIE
I've seen enough.

DEX
For God's sake, get hold of yourself! You're a Zoology major, you've seen blood before.

CHARLIE recovers himself a little bit, but his look at DEX is both accusing and fearful. DEX reads it.

DEX
You think I went crazy and killed him? Look at the floor, Charlie! Look there!

DEX points down, and CHARLIE follows his finger.

93 INT. THE BASEMENT LAB, WITH DEX AND CHARLIE 94
EVENING

CHARLIE
What...what does it mean?

Following his lapse, DEX has gotten hold of himself again.

DEX
It got out, that's what it means.

94 CONTINUED 94

DEX (continues)
I had hoped, grotesque as this may sound, that it had become... pot-bound or something, after all of those years. But it got out. Whatever it is. It pushed the crate off the table. And from the way that track looks, it pushed the crate back under the stairs. Where it had been safe for so long.

CHARLIE
But the...the...the body. Where's that, Professor Bradley? Where's Mike?

DEX (slowly)
I don't know.

CHARLIE turns abruptly and goes back toward the double doors and the basement corridor beyond.

DEX (shrill)
Where are you going?

CHARLIE doesn't answer. DEX runs after him.

95 INT. THE DOWNSTAIRS CORRIDOR, NEAR THE STAIRS 95
EVENING

CHARLIE, approaching the area of that triangular hole under the stairs, sees the JANITOR'S big four-cell flashlight lying on its side. It is almost underneath the stairs. He picks it up and turns it on. In the spotlight, we see that wide track of blood leading under the stairs...and just under the overhang, a piece of bloody gray cloth. Part of the JANITOR'S uniform.

DEX runs up, breathing hard, just as CHARLIE hunkers down and shines the light underneath, spotlighting the mutilated crate, which is once more against the far wall...but a little askew.

DEX (panting)
Charlie...for God's sake, be careful. If you'd seen that thing--

CHARLIE
Don't worry.

CHARLIE shoots the beam of light around, and it spot-lights one of the JANITOR'S workshoes. It has been

95 CONTINUED 95

savaged--the leather bitten right through, the laces hanging broken. It is quite near the crate, in a pool of blood.

CHARLIE
Christ, it looks like it went through a hay baler.

DEX
Now do you believe me?

CHARLIE leans under the overhang, reaching. DEX yanks him back.

DEX
Don't go near it!

CHARLIE
I don't want the crate, I want that shoe. I want to measure the bite-marks. Maybe we can figure out what we're dealing with here. Just let me...

CHARLIE leans in again--and suddenly something comes out of the crate at him. We see those huge, glowing eyes again. The thing is whistling and yammering. CHARLIE tries to pull back and the back of his head connects with the underside of the stairs.

He looks up, screams--and the thing from the crate lands on his face, hammering and whistling and biting.

DEX yanks back on CHARLIE'S shirt, and the thing from the crate suddenly looks over at him, bares its teeth, and hisses.

DEX backs away, hands to his face, totally freaked.

CHARLIE screams and beats at the thing on his face. More blood. After awhile his struggles lessen...then cease. He falls forward. He is under the stairs from the waist up; his buttocks and legs protrude into the hallway. Dimly, we can see the thing working him over, and we catch occasional glimpses of its eyes.

DEX (whispering)
Charlie, oh my God...

Slowly, CHARLIE'S limp body begins to slide under the stairs as the thing chitters and growls. His feet disappear into the shadows.

96 CONTINUED (2) 96

DEX
I'm sorry...

Horrible SOUNDS from under the stairs now. Smacking SOUNDS. Eating SOUNDS. Dinner is served.

The thing begins to whistle...low, this time. Contented.

For DEX, that does it. He backs away, strikes the wall, recoils in fear, and runs up the stairs again in utter panic.

CAMERA MOVED DOWN to that triangular hole under the stairs. The whistling SOUND goes on.

97 EXT. THE PARKING LOT LATE DAY 97

DEX runs across the nearly deserted parking lot to his car, drags the driver's side door open, and gets in. His hair is all but standing on end. He screams out of the parking lot and drives down the road.

98 EXT. OUTSIDE HENRY NORTHRUP'S HOUSE TWILIGHT 98

DEX'S car pulls up here. He stumbles out of the car and runs across the lawn, leaving the driver's side door of his car open. He looks decidedly wild and dishevelled.

DEX does no ring the bell; he leans on it. The door opens after a few moments and HENRY, now wearing a casual shirt and jeans, comes out. He displays consternation at DEX'S appearance.

HENRY
Dex, what the hell have you been--

DEX almost pushes him inside.

99 INT. THE HALLWAY TWILIGHT 99

DEX (babbling)
We have to stop it, Henry. We have to. Two men are dead already and we have to...to...oh, dear CHRIST!

HENRY
DEX. Slow down. You're going way too fast for me. What happened? Who's dead?

DEX does get hold of himself. He looks around.

99 CONTINUED 99

DEX
Wilma?

HENRY
Gone to her classes. Probably knock everybody over with the bourbon fumes. Never mind her; talk to me, Dex. What happened?

DEX
Can I have a drink first? I want a great big drink, Henry.

HENRY
Sure. Come on in the study.

100 INT. HENRY'S STUDY EVENING 100

It is as we saw it in sc. 84, but now with the addition of low light from shaded lamps. The soothing ticking SOUND of the clock.

DEX sits in the chair by the window, more in control now but still a wreck, all in all. He clasps his hands nervously between his thighs.

HENRY pours him a pretty good drink from the decanter, then looks at him (DEX is looking out the window) and pours again, filling the glass to the brim. He pours himself one, brings both over, gives DEX the big one.

HENRY
How.

He raises his glass slightly to DEX, but DEX takes no notice. He spills some of his drink, then drains the rest of it. All of it. Then he settles back, closes his eyes, blows out breath.

HENRY
The only time I ever saw someone do that was in the movies. What's going on, Dex? Tell me.

DEX (opening his eyes)
Two mem dead, and I could be blamed. I know that's a terrible consideration to have at a time like this, but it could be...yes, it could be my ass, Henry. But it wasn't me, it was the thing in the crate. And I don't even know what it is!

100 CONTINUED 100

He utters a high, shrieking laugh and holds his glass out for a refill. After a moment's thought, HENRY gets it for him.

HENRY
Who's dead.

DEX
Mike, the janitor in Amberson Hall. And Charlie Gereson, a grad student. He wanted to measure the bite-marks, Henry! (That high, shrieking laugh again) I guess he got his chance! I surely guess he did!

HENRY

Dex, I can't do you any good unless you stop being so goddam elliptical. Tell me what happened, from the beginning.

DEX takes the fresh drink, drains half of it, and then nods.

DEX
All right. I think I can do that, now. Thank God for you, Henry.

HENRY
First things first--are you sure your grad student and this janitor are dead?

DEX
Yes. The bodies are gone. Under the stairs. But the blood...the blood, you know...

HENRY
When you left the party--?

DEX
Yes, that was Mike. Mike called on the phone--

101 EXT. HENRY'S STREET EVENING 101

A quiet, suburban street; people mowing grass, hosing flowers; kids on bikes. In the foreground stands DEX'S car with the door open.

The streetlights all pop on at once, and we see that night has arrived

102 INT. HENRY'S STUDY NIGHT 102

DEX'S glass stands empty on the small table; HENRY is smoking a pipe with a poker face.

DEX
--and I came here. That's how it stands now. What am I going to do, Henry? Just what the hell am I going to do now?

HENRY (thoughtfully)
I don't know.

DEX
I had a hundred crazy ideas about how--how to get rid of it, coming over here. I kept thinking about Ryder's Quarry. You know that place?

HENRY
I know it.

DEX
I kept thinking that would be deep enough. If there was only a way to get that crate out there. I kept...kept thinking...I don't know anymore. Henry, am I going crazy?

HENRY puts a hand on his friend's shoulder.

HENRY
No.

DEX puts his face in his hands. HENRY is looking down at him, and perhaps here we see his face change. It becomes cold, thoughtful.

HENRY
I gotta use the facility, Dex. I'll be right back, okay?

DEX (face still in hands)
Okay, sure.

HENRY
And we'll decide what's to be done.

DEX
All right, Henry.

102 CONTINUED 102

HENRY goes to the study door. Once there, he pauses to look back thoughtfully at DEX...and again, his face and eyes seem coldly thoughtful. Then he goes out.

103 INT. DARK NIGHT 103

There is a buzzing SOUND, and the blackness is thrown back by a cold fluorescent bar. We're in HENRY'S bathroom, and HENRY is staring at himself in the mirror. His face is grim and yet frightened--different emotions seem to be warring there. And the grimness, the coldness--those emotions win.

He crosses to the mirror and pulls it back, revealing a medicine cabinet. From this he takes an unmarked bottle of pills, uncaps it, and shakes three into his hand (pills, not gel capsules). After a moment, he adds a fourth, then recaps the bottle and shuts the medicine cabinet.

He stares at himself for another long moment, and we see that he has reached some sort of cold resolution. He flicks off the light-switch.

Darkness again.

104 INT. HENRY'S STUDY NIGHT 104

DEX is still sitting by the window as HENRY comes in. He (DEX) looks in control of himself...but dazed.

HENRY
Let's get you another drink, Dex.

DEX
No, I think I've had enough. It's a wonder I'm not plastered out of my gourd. Shock, I guess.

HENRY (persuasively)
One more while we talk this over. For both of us. We may need it.

DEX
Okay.

HENRY moves to the bar, and we may see DEX in the mirror, but THE CAMERA FOLLOWS HENRY. As they continue to talk, HENRY pours two drinks from the decanter...and drops all four of the pills into one of them. With his body blocking his actions, he stirs the pills with a swizzle stick. He may speak a little louder to mask the SOUND.

104 CONTINUED 104

HENRY
After we have this one, DEX, I'm driving you home in the MG.

DEX
Home? But--

HENRY (smoothly)
I'll leave a note for Wilma telling her where we've gone and when we get to your place we'll call...

He brings the drinks over and hands DEX one.

HENRY (continuing)
...who do you suggest, Dex? Campus Security? The town cops? The state police?

DEX (sipping)
But you DO believe me, don't you? Just say you do, Henry?

HENRY
I believe you, Dex. Now drink your drink. How.

He tips his glass toward DEX, and after a moment, DEX returns the salute and takes a big swallow of his drink. He grimaces, and HENRY watches him with hidden apprehension.

HENRY (after a moment)
I don't know what that thing could be, or where it came from, but yeah, I believe you, Dexter. (He stands) Finish your drink while I write my wife. And for Christ's sake, let's get out of here before she gets back.

He moves toward the desk, and DEX gets up and goes to him. Pulls at his sleeve.

DEX
But we won't go anywhere near Amberson Hall, will we? Promise me, Henry! We'll stay away from there, won't we?

HENRY stares at his friend, and then speaks with great sincerity and solemnity.

HENRY
Dex...does the Pope shit in the woods?

105 EXT. HENRY NORTHRUP'S HOUSE NIGHT 105

The door opens; HENRY and DEX come out. HENRY is supporting DEX, who can barely walk. He might by drunk, but we know better.

DEX (thickly)
Can hardly walk. Guess I'm plastered outta my fuckin gourd anyway, huh?

HENRY is leading DEX toward the garage.

HENRY
You've got a perfect right. Don't you worry, Dex. I'm going to take care of it. I'm going to take care of everything.

DEX (slurring now)
Guh get my car, Herry. Sss my car there.

HENRY
I'll take care of it, don't worry.

HENRY nearly props DEX against the side of the garage while he runs the door up on its track. As he does so, DEX collapses in a kind of comic slide, his buttocks sliding down the side of the garage as his knees unhinge. HENRY gets him up, loops his arm over his neck, and gets DEX into the garage. He is almost carrying DEX now.

After a moment, the SOUND of a car starting up comes, and then an MG midget (top up) backs out of the garage. HENRY backs it down to the foot of the driveway and then parks.

106 INT. HENRY'S MG NIGHT 106

HENRY behind the wheel. DEX is snoring in the passenger bucket, head back, mouth open.

HENRY
Dex? You awake?...Dex?

No response. DEX is snoring noisily. HENRY pulls on the emergency brake.

HENRY (kindly)
Sleep well, old friend.

He gets out of the car and goes back toward the house.

107 INT. HENRY'S KITCHEN NIGHT 107

There is a note on the kitchen table. HENRY opens the door, steps in, goes to the table, crumples the note, and puts it in his pocket. He tears another sheet off the note-minder by the kitchen phone, and begins to write. THE CAMERA PANS DOWN so we can read the note:

"Dear Billie--Just had a call from Dexter Stanley. He's hysterical. Some sort of indiscretion with one of his female grad students. He's at Amberson Hall, and so is the girl. Can you come? I know you don't like Dex much, but this sounds like a scandal that could ruin his career. Come as quick as you can.

Henry"

HENRY looks at this note, and then smiles. He leaves it on the table and leaves the kitchen.

108 EXT. IN FRONT OF HENRY'S HOUSE NIGHT 108

The MG pulls away from the curb, the lights coming on.

109 INT. A BEDROOM NIGHT 109

A neat, austere little room. HENRY enters, practically dragging DEX, who is sagging and muttering. HENRY gets him over to the bed and lets him down with a gasp of relief. After a moment to recover himself, he gets the bedclothes back and removes DEX'S shoes. Then he gets DEX under the covers, fully dressed. He goes to the door, looks back once--with kindness and compassion--then turns the light off and closes the door.

110 INT. HENRY'S MG NIGHT 110

He's driving across town, driving fast. He glances at his watch once. We should get the idea that he's working against time.

111 EXT. THE AMBERSON HALL PARKING LOT NIGHT 111

There are two parked cars here, but the lot is fairly big and the parked cars so far apart that the entire place looks deserted. HENRY'S MG turns in and parks. He gets out and hurries toward the building.

112 INT. AMBERSON HALL, WITH HENRY NIGHT 112

The place is shadowy and almost totally black, but HENRY doesn't turn on any lights--afraid of being noticed. He moves slowly toward the stairs, breathing hard...another place where maybe a little tension can be strung out.

As he reaches the head of the stairs, things get a little

112 CONTINUED 112

brighter, because the flourescents in the downstairs lab have been left on.

Before starting down the stairs, HENRY glances through the open doors at his left, into the lecture-hall. He sees the scaffolding, the painter's dropcloth, and then goes on downstairs.

113 INT. THE BASEMENT LAB NIGHT 113

The lab is exactly as it was when last we saw it--CHARLIE'S papers, bugs, and calculator on one table, a heap of boards from the crate on another. The table where the crate was is splattered with drying blood. So is the wall behind it. And we can see the track on the floor where the crate was pushed back out toward the stairs.

HENRY comes in, looks at this silent, bloody scene, and claps a hand over his mouth. For a moment he struggles with his gorge; his eyes are wide and horrified. He turns for a moment, looking nervously back down the hall toward the stairs, and then turns back to the lab.

He crosses to the table, and we see the blood here has formed a straight-edge on three sides (the fourth is blurred, presumably where the crate was pushed off the edge), complete with right angles. It is the shape of the crate--final proof that it was really there.

HENRY glances at his watch again and hurries out of the room.

114 EXT. OUTSIDE HENRY NORTHRUP'S HOUSE NIGHT 114

The NORTHRUP'S second car, the wagon, pulls up at the curb. WILMA gets out and walks across the lawn, weaving a bit. She may or may not be anymore drunk than when we last saw her, but she's sure no soberer.

At the door she fumbles in her purse for her keys, finds them at last, then tries the door before using them. It opens.

WILMA (shrilly)
Henry, how many times have I told you to lock the goddam door?...
Henry?

No answer. WILMA makes an irritated little sound and goes inside.

115 INT. A CORRIDOR IN AMBERSON HALL NIGHT 115

Here is a door marked CUSTODIAN. HENRY hurries up to it and tries it. The knob turns, the door opens, and HENRY heaves a sigh of relief. He finds the lightswitch inside and the custodian's closet is flooded with yellow light. There is a little janitor's cart parked in here.

Moving quickly, HENRY begins to load it with rags and cleaner. He puts a mop into the brackets on the end. He's sweating. With the cart full, he glances at his watch again, then pulls the cart out into the hall, snaps off the light, and shuts the door of the closet. He pushes the cart off down the hall.

116 INT. THE KITCHEN OF THE NORTHRUP HOUSE NIGHT 116

WILMA comes in and snaps on the overhead flourescent ring. She is looking rather pissed--not incommon with WILMA. She looks around the kitchen, hands on hips, then sees the note on the table. She grabs it up, ready to be furious with HENRY...but as she reads, her expression becomes first startled, then thoughtful, then triumphant. She stuffs the note into her pocket and brays laughter.

WILMA
Dex Bradley got caught playing hide-the-salami with some young piece of quiff! I'm not surprised!

She brays laughter again.

WILMA
And I'm supposed to pull his iron out of the fire...Christ, what would you do without me, Henry?

Now her eyes are sparkling with a kind of vicious interest. This is obviously something she can't pass up. She turns off the light and goes out again.

WILMA

Dex Bradley, that sanctimonious old goat!

117 INT. THE BASEMENT LAB IN AMBERSON HALL NIGHT 117

HENRY is cleaning frantically--his sleeves are rolled up, and his hair hangs down over his forehead. He's filled a sink with hot, soapy water, and he's currently scrubbing the bloody table where the crate rested. He's moving fast, almost running.

118 EXT. OUTSIDE THE NORTHRUP HOUSE NIGHT 118

The station wagon roars away from the curb.

119 INT. THE BASEMENT HALL OF AMBERSON HALL NIGHT 119

HENRY is down on his hands and knees like a lunatic washerwoman, scrubbing his way up the crate's backtrail. As he nears the hole under the stairs, he sees the flashlight, and a pen. He pockets the pen, grabs the flashlight...and a low whistling SOUND comes from under the stairs.

HENRY freezes, his face a picture of fear. After a moment the whistling stops, and he shines the light under the stairs.

There is the crate, back against the wall, with most of the boards that were covering its top now off. Another pen. And CHARLIE'S glasses.

HENRY snatches these out as quick as he can, and then glances at his watch once more. He hurries back toward the janitor's cart.

120 EXT. THE AMBERSON HALL PARKING LOT NIGHT 120

The NORTHRUP station wagon pulls in and parks beside HENRY'S MG. WILMA gets out of the wagon and strides purposefully toward the doors of Amberson Hall. CAMERA FOLLOWS as she mounts the steps.

121 INT. THE UPPER CORRIDOR OF AMBERSON HALL NIGHT 121

As before, it's very dark in here. WILMA enters, and begins feeling her way along.

WILMA
Henry?...Henry?...Where are you, Henry?

She shuffles on aways further, and suddenly a shadow detaches utself from the blackness and grabs her. WILMA shrieks.

HENRY
Oh, Christ. I didn't mean to scare you, Billie. Sorry.

WILMA
You ought to be! What are you doing, creeping around up here in the dark? Where's Dex? What kind of a mess has he gotten himself in?

121 CONTINUED 121

HENRY (takes her arm)
It's easier just to show you, I think. They're downstairs. Come on.

HENRY leads her toward the stairs, and as the light brightens, we get a better look at them both. HENRY'S sleeves are still rolled up, but he's combed his hair and doesn't look too tacky--except for his eyes, which are rather wild and starey. In his breast pocket are a couple of pens--and CHARLIE GERESON'S gold-rimmed glasses.

WILMA snatches these out before HENRY can stop her. One of the lenses is shattered.

WILMA
What's this?

HENRY
Well...they...I found...

WILMA (almost gleeful)
Henry...did he beat her?

HENRY
Well...

WILMA
How bad is she? Is she conscious?

HENRY
It...it's better if you see yourself. Just downstairs.

They start down.

122 INT. THE FOOT OF THE STAIRS, WITH HENRY AND WILMA 122
NIGHT

We're looking up at them as they descend. All at once HENRY begins to giggle. WILMA stares at him as if he has gone mad--which, in a way, is exactly what has happened. HENRY looks back at her, and begins to laugh.

WILMA
What are you laughing about, Henry? Your best friend gets in a scrape with a girl and you're laughing?

HENRY begins to laugh even harder. They reach the bottom of the stairs. His hand is on WILMA'S arm. He speaks through his laughter.

122 CONTINUED 122

HENRY
Well, there is a funny side to it. Wait until you see. You'll think so, too, Billie. It's...it's pretty funny.

WILMA
Let go of me, you're hurting my arm. You're hysterical, Henry. Exactly what I would have expected.

HENRY (laughing)
Oh, I don't think you'll expect this, Billie. This is going to be an entirely new experience.

He begins to lead her around to the space under the stairs. WILMA is alarmed at last.

WILMA
The lab's the other way, Henry. I can see the light. What are you up to?

HENRY
Yes, the lab...but the girl's under the stairs, Billie. Wait until you see... (Laughing so hard he can hardly speak, now; it is the laughter of the utterly mad, and it echoes in the silence like demons) That's what's so funny...the girl...the girl has crawled under the stairs and won't come out...she...she...

But he can't speak anymore; he only laughs in great, loon-like bursts as they reach the triangular space.

WILMA
Henry...what did he DO to her?

HENRY begins to push her into the space under the stairs. He's still laughing. After a surprised moment, WILMA begins to struggle with him.

HENRY (laughing, pushing)
You can get her out, I'm sure you can get her out, no trouble, no problem.

WILMA (screaming)
What are you doing? What are you doing, Henry?

122 CONTINUED (2) 122

HENRY (laughing)
What I should have done a long time ago. Get under there, Wilma. Just tell it to call you Billie, you bitch.

He's got her about halfway under, but she's fighting him tooth and nail...and WILMA NORTHRUP has got a lot of both.

WILMA
Stop it, Henry! Stop it right now! I...I'll scream!

HENRY (loud, laughing)
Scream all you want! I'll help you, Wilma! (To the thing in the crate) Come on out! Wake up! Dinnertime! Poison meat! Wake up! Wake up!

WILMA shrieks piercingly--a sound which is probably more rage than fear, and in the aftermath, we hear that whistling SOUND, rising, growing shrilly and ugly.

HENRY kicks her under the stairs.

123 INT. UNDER THE STAIRS NIGHT 123

WILMA falls over on her back, narrowly missing hitting her head. At the same moment the thing comes out of the crate, an alien, furry thing with a body like a whippet, six spider-like arms ending in huge claws, and a great head which seems mostly luminous eyes and great gnashing teeth.

WILMA begins to scream once more and then the thing lands on her face, squirming and biting and clawing. Although its furry, writhing body mercifully obscures our view, we can guess what it's doing to her face.

124 INT. THE DOWNSTAIRS HALL, NEAR THE STAIRS NIGHT 124

HENRY is backing away, no longer laughing. From under the stairs come the SOUNDS of the thing from the crate biting and growling and whistling. HENRY'S face is pallid, his eyes huge.

HENRY (whispering)
Just tell it to call you Billie.

125 INT. DEXTER BRADLEY'S BEDROOM DAY 125

Bright summer sunshine is streaming in through the window.

125 CONTINUED 125

DEX is in bed, fast asleep...but after a moment his eyes open. He looks around, blankly at first, and then with dawning terror as he remembers the previous night. He sits up quickly, then winces and holds his head. He groans.

HENRY (voice)
Headache?

DEX, startled, looks around. THE CAMERA DRAWS BACK and we see HENRY sitting there on the far side of the room, watching DEX calmly.

DEX
Henry!...Yeah, I've got a splitter. Too much booze, I guess. I don't even remember you bringing me home.

HENRY
I'm afraid it wasn't all booze, Dex.

DEX
What--

He breaks off as a much stronger consideration occurs to his mind.

DEX
Henry, what about the crate? Did you call the police?

HENRY (calm)
The crate's been taken care of. As for your head, I put some of Wilma's sleeping pills in your last drink. I'm sorry, but the effects will pass.

DEX
Henry, what are you talking about?

HENRY
I came back into the house and switched the note I left Wilma for another one that said you were having some problems with a female graduate student in the basement of Amberson Hall. I knew that was the one thing that would bring her on the run, Dexter. She had a mind like a city sewer main.

125 CONTINUED (2) 125

DEX (horrified)
HAD?...HAD?...Oh Jesus Henry what did you do?

HENRY
You know damn well what I did. I killed her, Dex. Ding-dong, the wicked bitch is dead. (Pause) I've killed my wife and now I've put my future in your hands.

DEX
The crate. Henry, what have you done with the crate?

HENRY
That's the beauty of it. You put the final piece in the jigsaw yourself. The crate is at the bottom of Ryder's Quarry.

126 EXT. THE PARKING LOT OF AMBERSON HALL NIGHT 126

HENRY comes hurrying out of the building and crosses toward the MG and the station wagon. He gets in the wagon and starts it up (of course WILMA'S keys would have gone with her purse--under the stairs, that is--but most couples keep dupe sets, so that's no problem).

HENRY (voice-over)
I don't know much about the Zo Department, Dex, but I've been in the English-Math Building for twenty years now, and I thought it could be done. It might be dangerous, but I thought getting rid of Wilma would be worth the risk. For that I would have risked almost anything.

127 EXT. THE STATION WAGON, FOLLOWING SHOT NIGHT 127

It crosses the almost deserted campus and parks in the lot of another building and HENRY gets out and hurries toward it.

HENRY (v/o continues)
You see, I knew there was a crate in the basement of the English Department. I flashed on that very early in your story... associating one monster with

127 CONTINUED 127

HENRY (v/o continues)
another, I suppose. Last year when Professor Badlinger was in England on sabbatical, he got his kids a huge stuffed animal that was supposed to look like the Loch Ness monster. It came back in this gigantic wooden crate--

128 INT. THE BASEMENT OF THE ENGLISH-MATH BUILDING NIGHT 128

This is a long room containing heating equipment, school supplies such as blue-books, notebooks, and old texts neatly stacked on shelves. Over to one side is a lot of janitorial stuff and a big wooden crate with the words SHIP FROM ALDERSHOT TO SOUTHAMPTON VIA LORRY stencilled on the side; below this line is P.O.E. BOSTON MASSACHUSETTS (U.S.A.).

The crate is open on top, but it has a hinged lid. Inside there is a drift of crumpled-up papers. Trash.

HENRY enters in a hurry, goes immediately to the crate, and begins to throw the papers out onto the floor.

HENRY (v/o continues)
--and the crate had a hinged top.

Once all the trash-paper is out, HENRY goes over to the janitorial stuff and wheels a dolly back to the crate. He closes the hinged lid, stands the crate on the dolly, and cinches the straps. He starts to wheel it out, glances back into the janitor's area sets the dolly down, and goes back. He selects one of those poles which janitors use to open and close high windows, and then leaves with the dolly, the crate, and the window-pole.

129 EXT. THE PARKING LOT OF AMBERSON HALL NIGHT 129

The station wagon turns in again, this time parking as close to the door as possible--or maybe it parks at a side entrance where there are no steps to cope with.

The tailgate is down, and we see Badlinger's crate, still strapped to the dolly, protruding from the back.

HENRY parks, gets out, and muscles the dolly out of the wagon. He takes it inside, and during this, he continues to talk.

129 CONTINUED 129

HENRY (voice-over)
I didn't meet anyone. At this time of year--and at no other--the campus is quite deserted. Summer classes are over, and the fall semester doesn't start for another two weeks. The whole thing was almost hellishly perfect. I didn't see so much as a pair of headlights.

130 INT. THE STAIRS LEADING TO THE BASEMENT NIGHT 130

HENRY is easing the dolly down the stairs. He also has the window-pole. At the bottom he goes around to the space under the stairs. We see sweat on his face now. He unstraps the crate and puts it on the floor just outside the hole, open. He puts the window-pole beside it and goes back upstairs again.

131 INT. THE LECTURE-HALL AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS NIGHT 131

HENRY goes in and gets the painter's dropcloth under the scaffold.

132 INT. AT THE FOOT OF THE STAIRS NIGHT 132

HENRY spreads the canvas dropcloth. He puts Badlinger's crate on the dropcloth, still open. Then (sweating heavily now), he takes the window-pole and uses it to pull the crate under the stairs out. It is a nasty thing, splintered now, grimed with drying blood. We hear a faint squealing SOUND as it moves over the floor.

When it's out all the way, HENRY puts the pole aside--gently. He hesitates, and then, forcing himself, he bends over and picks the crate up by its two sides and lifts it into Badlinger's crate--this should take some time, and should have the tense quality of a bomb-defusing scene in one of those old British films from the early fifties. Through all of this, HENRY is speaking--his voice is low, intense, rapid.

HENRY (voice-over)
I used the window-pole to hook it out from under the stairs, and then I...I picked it up and put it in Badlinger's crate. It was a perfect fit.

DEX (v/o; utter horror)
You picked it up?

132 CONTINUED 132

HENRY (v/o)
I had to take the chance. I picked it up as if it was full of eggs. No...as if it were full of jars with nitro-glycerine in them. It was my first good look at it, remember. You know what it made me think of, Dex? Those joke-boxes they used to sell in the novelty shops. You'd push a little lever and the box would grind and shake and then a pale green hand would come out and push the lever back to STOP and then snap inside again. But I got it inside Badlinger's crate, Dex. It was sleeping, I think. Why not? It had been well-fed. But when I leaned over to close the top, I saw...

HENRY has grasped the hinged top of Badlinger's crate and is about to close it over the crate from under the stairs when as expression of horrified fascination comes over his face.

133 INT. THE CRATE, HENRY'S POV NIGHT 133

It's almost totally black inside--but we see WILMA'S face. It has a shrunken, shrivelled look, like a Halloween mask. Her eyes stare up with blank horror.

Then something else moves in the box and we hear the SOUND--very low--of a whistle.

HENRY slams the lid of Badlinger's crate shut, blotting it out.

134 INT. THE BASEMENT NIGHT 134

HENRY wraps the tarp around Badlinger's crate, upends it on the foot of the dolly, and cinches it tight. He's working fast now. From inside Badlinger's crate we hear that whistling, and an angry chittering sound--then silence.

HENRY tilts the dolly and begins to work his way up the stairs.

135 EXT. AMBERSON HALL NIGHT 135

HENRY comes out, works the crate down the stairs, and rolls it over to the station wagon. He sets it down,

135 CONTINUED 135

and we can see him mentally getting ready for a big lift. He yanks the dolly up into the back with a grunt and a grimace, shoves it in as far as it will go, and then collapses against the car, panting.

A moment or two later, he goes around to the driver's side, gets in, starts up, and drives off.

136 EXT. A ROAD IN THE COUNTRY NIGHT 136

The station wagon is moving swiftly along the road, headlights probing the dark.

HENRY (voice-over)
I drove out to Ryder's Quarry.

137 EXT. AN OVERGROWN DIRT ROAD NIGHT 137

The wagon moves slowly and cautiously up this road. Underbrush scrapes and whips at the sides, and as it passes THE CAMERA, we can see Badlinger's crate, still strapped to the dolly, jutting out.

138 EXT. RYDER'S QUARRY NIGHT 138

This is a sullen body of water about sixty feet wide in the middle of nowhere. The station wagon comes slowly toward it from the head of the dirt road, turns, and backs toward it until the back wheels are damned near over the edge. We hear the SOUND of the emergency brake going on, and then HENRY gets out and comes around to the back. During this business, he speaks:

HENRY (v/o)
Nobody swims out there anymore, you know that. Not since that drunken frat party two years ago, when that double drowning happened. Christ, nobody even knows how deep it is. Deep enough, though. I hope.

He hesitates, seizes the box, lets go, then grabs it again. It comes out slowly. He's working from the side, and that makes it awkward.

HENRY (v/o)
I couldn't even bring myself to grab the thing at first, Dex. In a very real way, it was three bodies ...the remains of three human beings. Well...two human beings and Wilma. And I started to wonder...where did

138 CONTINUED 138

HENRY (v/o continues)
they go? I saw Wilma's face, but it looked...it looked all FLAT, like a Halloween mask. How much of them did it eat, Dex? How much COULD it eat? It was still whistling. I could hear it, muffled and faint...and I think maybe... at the very end...it suspected what was happening...

We hear that whistling SOUND, and just as the dolly begins to tilt out and down, the thing inside begins to growl and yammer. Then the thing splashes into the water. There are ripples. And bubbles. And then the surface of the quarry is still again.

HENRY NORTHRUP leans against the side of the wagon, head back, eyes closed, chest heaving.

139 INT. DEX BRADLEY'S LIVING ROOM DAY 139

The two of them are sitting there, drinking coffee.

DEX
Then you came back here.

HENRY
First I went back to Amberson Hall and cleaned under the stairs. There was a lot of stuff from Wilma's purse there. The janitor's key-ring. Some change. I think I cleaned up everything. I drove over here, relieved you of your car-keys, then drove back to my house and parked the station-wagon just where Wilma always parks it. Then I drove your car over here and put it in your garage. It's been a long night.

DEX
Henry...what if I'd waked up before you got back here and called the police?

HENRY (simply)
You didn't.

There is a moment of silence.

139 CONTINUED 139

HENRY
The question is, what happens now? Three people are going to be reported missing quite soon. The only element that connects all three is the University, and that's a tenuous connection at best. There are no signs of foul play, I saw to that. And there are really no bodies. Are there, Dex?

DEX (thoughtfully)
No. I suppose there aren't.

HENRY
What about you, Dex? What are you going to say?

DEX
Nothing.

HENRY (great relief)
Thank you. Thank you, Dex.

DEX
No need to thank me, Henry. Just as long as you understand that I expect to whip your ass at chess twice a week for the rest of our lives.

HENRY
Well, we'll see about that, won't we?

The two of them smile at each other for a moment.

HENRY
There is one loose end, Dex.

DEX
What's that?

HENRY
It's small, and I almost hesitate to mention it. For you, I think it would mean crossing the line between bystander and accessory...

DEX
Come on, Henry. Don't waltz.

HENRY
Well, it's my MG. It's still in

139 CONTINUED (2) 139

HENRY (continues)
the Amberson parking lot. I was wondering if you'd run me over there in your car. To pick it up.

There is a pause...and then a slow smile covers DEX'S face.

DEX
Henry...what are friends for?

140 EXT. THE AMBERSON PARKING LOT MORNING 140

The door of HENRY'S MG swings shut, and HENRY starts it up. DEX is standing next to it; in the background is his car, idling. HENRY looks out.

HENRY
Okay, Dex.

DEX
There's only one thing that bothers me.

HENRY
What?

DEX (a return to the fear)
What if it gets out, Henry? What if it gets out?

HENRY (reassuringly)
If you could have seen the way I wrapped it up--

141 EXT. RYDER'S QUARRY EARLY MORNING 141

A litter of boards is floating on the surface of the quarry. THE CAMERA MOVES IN on one of these. We can see bloodstains, and the stencilled words PAELLA.

HENRY (continues; v/o)
--you wouldn't worry, Dex. That thing is drowned in its box seventy feet down. So relax.

THE CAMERA MOVES UP to the far side of the quarry. This side is heavily screened with thick bushes. Suddenly they begin to shake, and from behind them we hear that ugly, savage yammering SOUND...then silence...then a whistling SOUND like a tea-kettle which has just reached a rolling boil.

141 CONTINUED 141

FREEZE-FRAME. As previously, the FREEZE-FRAME becomes a comic picture, this one taking up a full page. At the bottom of the comic panel are two words in boldface type: THE END?

The SOUNDS of the storm come up louder than before, and a gust of wind blows the CREEPSHOW comic book out of the trashcan.

142 EXT. A GUTTER ON MAIN STREET NIGHT 142

The CREEPSHOW comic lands, cover upward, near the gutter, but not in it--that would wreck it, because the gutter is full of rushing water that is swirling down a nearby storm grating.

Thunder and lightning.

The wind flips the comic open again, riffling the pages quickly, giving us a kaleidoscopic view of the three stories we've had so far. It falls open to a new story, and THE CAMERA MOVES IN on the splash-page.

We see a man's head--just his head--apparently sitting on the sand of a beach. To the left is the shadow of a man standing. In the background is the ocean. The face of this apparently disembodied head is one of extreme terror. The eyes are turned up; apparently to the man who is casting the shadow.

The title of this story is SOMETHING TO TIDE YOU OVER.

The printed matter fades out; the comic picture becomes a FREEZE-FRAME; then it begins to move. So:

143 EXT. ON THE DESERTED BEACH DAY 143

HARRY WENTWORTH
Please, Richard, you can't do this...don't...don't do anything you'll regret later...

The disembodied head is speaking, and now we realize it's not really a disembodied head at all; HARRY is buried in the soft beach-sand, all the way up to his chin.

SOUNDS in the background: gulls crying, and the constant beat of the surf on the shore.

The shadow moves slightly.

VICKERS (voice)
Like you did?

143 CONTINUED 143

HARRY (pleading, begging)
Richard, you must understand...we were in love...we ARE in love...

VICKERS (voice)
Love! You were fucking each other. There's a big difference, Harry. And that was my wife you were fucking. A big mistake.

HARRY
Don't hurt her. Please...Richard ...don't hurt her.

The shadow begins to move away.

HARRY (terror)
Where are you going? Don't leave me like this!

VICKERS (voice)
Oh, I'll be back...before the tide comes in. There's something I want to show you. I'll only be ten minutes or so. It'll give you time, Harry. Time to think about how you got yourself into this mess to start with.

During this last sentence, VICKER'S voice is getting fainter; we hear the SOUND of sand under his shoes as he moves away.

HARRY (screams)
Richard! Come back! Don't leave me here!

A mocking laugh from RICHARD VICKERS.

HARRY
RICHARD FOR CHRIST'S SAKE!

No answer; the footsteps merely fade away. THE CAMERA MOVES IN on HARRY, who is in mortal terror. His eyes move toward the sea.

144 EXT. THE BEACH, FROM HARRY'S POV DAY 144

The tide is coming in, wave upon wave, but it is still a fair distance away. The beach is totally deserted. About halfway up from where the waves are expending the last of their force, we can see a child's blue plastic pail, abandoned.

145 EXT. HARRY DAY 145

He is still terrified, and he might be struggling to get out of the sand, although it is hard to tell with only his head showing. If he is, he soon gives it up as a bad job; for a moment he closes his eyes, and then opens them again. A certain hopelessness has come into his face.

We hear the SOUND of the surf, MAGNIFIED, as the CAMERA MOVES IN ON HARRY TO EXTREME CLOSE-UP. His terror and hopelessness are clearly drawn on his face; they are as clear as the granules of sand on one cheek.

The voice of RICHARD begins to repeat over and over again:

RICHARD (voice)
Time to think about how you got yourself into this mess to start with...time to think about how you got yourself into this mess to start with...time to...

We now go into a FLASHBACK, handled however this seems most comfortable to the director.

146 INT. HARRY'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM EARLY MORNING 146

The room is deserted, but it's a very nice room; a member of the U.M.C. lives here--that's upper middle class, not U.S. Marine Corps. You don't buy furniture like this--the casual Navaho throw-rug, the shite sling-chairs, the RCA SelectaVision system, the Klee on one wall--for much under a hundred thousand a year.

The doorbell rings. It rings several times, in fact; then the visitor, apparently growing impatient, begins to hammer on the door.

HARRY (voice; sleepy; irritable)
All right, all right, ALL RIGHT!

The pounding--hammering, actually--continues a bit, but falls silent as HARRY comes out of his bedroom, belting his robe around his waist. He is quite obviously half-asleep; why not? It's no more than five in the morning.

He goes to the door, but doesn't open it.

HARRY
Who is it?

RICHARD (voice)
Richard Vickers.

146 CONTINUED 146

HARRY pauses, obviously surprised and nonplussed. At last:

HARRY (a bit cautious)
I don't know any--

RICHARD (impatient)
You know who I am, Wentworth. Let's not play games.

HARRY'S face doesn't register guilt but a kind of unhappy resignation...and a bit of caution. HARRY is about thirty-five, good-looking. His face is pleasant and open.

The door is on a chain, and he opens it just as far as the chain will allow. In the crack, we get our first look at RICHARD VICKERS. He is perhaps ten years older than HARRY, dark, saturnine. We get no feelings of warmth or openness from RICHARD.

HARRY
Who are you and what do you want?

RICHAR
Oh, I think you know who I am. You've been fucking my wife for almost eight months now. You mean she doesn't talk about her big-shot producer husband? Three TV shows, one on each network, all in the top fifteen? I'd call her an ungrateful bitch, but I suppose I've known that all along.

HARRY attempts to slam the door shut. RICHARD sticks his foot in it.

HARRY
You don't want to do that, mister. Maybe it works on TV, but I can bench-press three hundred pounds. You get your foot out of my door or you're going to lose half of it.

RICHARD
Oh, you could do it. I have no doubt. But you won't.

HARRY
Why not?

RICHARD
Because if you do, something nasty

146 CONTINUED (2) 146

RICHARD (continues)
is going to happen to Rebecca. Something so unbelievably nasty that your little corporate mind couldn't begin to conceive of it.

Now we see uncertainty on HARRY'S face for the first time. RICHARD sees it, too, and he begins to grin. It is not a particularly pleasant grin.

RICHARD
Believe me, Harry...youwant to talk to me.

After a slight pause:

HARRY
You'll have to get your goddam foot out of the door so I can let off the chain.

RICHARD takes his foot out. HARRY closes the door and after the minutest of hesitations, unhooks the chain, opens the door, and steps back warily. He is obviously ready to fight, if the situation seems to indicate that.

RICHARD steps in, smiling, looking perfectly at home. He is a bit dandified in dark, close-fitting pants, a white shirt of coarse weave, and an ascot. He closes the door behind him.

HARRY
What's this about Becky?

RICHARD
Ah! Becky! So you DO know her.

HARRY
You know I do.

RICHARD
In the Biblical sense?

HARRY
Look, it's 5-0-5 in the morning, and I don't want to play games. You found out. All right. We were going to tell you very soon anyway--

RICHARD
Sure, right, yes, I just BET.

146 CONTINUED (3) 146

HARRY
It's the truth, whether you like it or not. You ought to be grateful, friend. If you ever loved he--and Becky says you never did--you certainly don't now. There'll be no alimony, none of that community property shit. She just wants OUT.

Through all of the foregoing, RICHARD has maintained a certain brittle, dangerous charm. Now it begins to crack the tiniest bit.

RICHARD
I don't know if I ever loved her or not, Harry--may I call you Harry? good!--but that doesn't matter, not in the slightest. You see, what's mine, I keep. Nobody takes it away from me. I made her a fucking star, for Chrissake. You think I'm going to let her walk out with a jumped-up bank-loan officer?

The two of them have moved toward the center of HARRY'S apartment. Outside the window we can see the ocean, at some distance.

HARRY
I'm still not clear on what you want.

RICHARD
I want you to come with me. I have a beach place not far from here. (Unconscious boasting) Two hundred acres of beachfront. I want to discuss this on my own turf.

HARRY
November's a little cold for swimming...especially in Massachusetts. What's this about Becky?

RICHARD takes a pocket cassette recorder/player from his pocket, one of those small ones about the size of a cigarette pack. He pushes the PLAY button and puts it on the coffee table. THE CAMERA MOVES IN until we can see the sprockets turning.

146 CONTINUED (4) 146

When BECKY speaks from the machine, her voice is panicky, but oddly broken by pauses.

BECKY
Harry, he's got me in...come, you have to come or the...PLEASE HARRY PLEASE...COME...HE'S CRAZY ...OH DEAR GOD...RICHARD, PLEASE ...PLEASE DON'T

A long shrill scream comes from the tape-player...then silence.

147 INT. RICHARD'S APARTMENT MORNING 147

HARRY is white-faced and terrified. RICHARD is smug, grinning.

HARRY
What have you done with her? What--

He's unable to contain himself. He leaps at RICHARD, knocking him backwards, first over a coffee-table, which overturns, and then onto the sofa. HARRY'S hands find RICHARD'S neck.

HARRY
So help me Christ I'll choke it out of you--

RICHARD (strangled)
Choke me...and she'll die for sure...

Little by little HARRY lets go. RICHARD sits up and goes through a fussy series of readjustments to himself, finishing by straightening his ascot. In spite of the sttempted choking, he seems rather pleased.

RICHARD
That was naughty, Wentworth. Very naughty. Look at that coffee-table.

He points. HARRY doesn't look.

RICHARD
I could have hit my head on the corner of that and died...that's what always happens in the old Alfred Hitchcock TV shows.

HARRY
That would have been fine by me.

147 CONTINUED 147

RICHARD
But then you would never know where Becky is, would you? And believe me, Wentworth, you want to know. Because at eleven o'clock this morning (he glances at his watch)...just about five hours and forty-five minutes from now, it's going to be too late.

HARRY stares at him for a moment, then gets up and goes to the telephone. He begins to dial.

RICHARD (sharply)
Who are you calling?

HARRY (still dialing)
Who do you think, you fucking crazyman? I'm calling the police.

RICHARD
Do that and she'll die, Wentworth. That I promise you.

HARRY hesitates. Looks at RICHARD. RICHARD takes out a cigarette case and opens it.

RICHARD
We'll work this out between us or it won't be worked out. Understand it and believe it.

HARRY
Where is she?

RICHARD (smiles; holds out the cigarette case)
Cigarette?

148 EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD ON THE COAST, TWO-LANE BLACKTOP DAY 148

A small sportscar--Fiat, MG, maybe a Mercedes--comes toward the CAMERA. It blips by and the CAMERA turns to track it--in the foreground we see a sign which reads COMFORT POINT 6MI. The road is lonely, bordered on both sides by dunes and sawgrass. As the SOUND of the motor fades, we can hear surf.

149 INT. IN THE CAR DAY 149

RICHARD is behind the wheel, driving with what he probably

149 CONTINUED 149

imagines is Continental elan. HARRY beside him, in jeans and a blue workshirt. They pass over a bridge; beneath there is slick mud and kelp.

RICHARD
Rotten smell when the tide's out, isn't it? Smells like dead fish, or something.

HARRY
You know, I just don't understand what you're trying to prove by this.

RICHARD
I'm not trying to prove a damned thing, Harry my boy. You said earlier that I'm not sane. I accept that. On certain subjects --most particularly on what is mine--I'm not sane at all. At least I'm going to give you a chance to rescue the maiden fair.

HARRY
Where is she?

RICHARD
'Where is she? Where is she?' You sound like a broken record. She's where she's safe. And you'll see her. I promise. Here we are.

He turns into a long drive--sandy ruts and high sawgrass in the middle. A lonely spot.

150 EXT. A BEACH SHACK DAY 150

The car pulls up in front of this. Lonelier and lonelier! The car and the shack are the only human artifacts we can see. Beyond the shack is a long, long beach--powdery white sand, then a high-tide line of twisted kelp, then a long, slick-brown stretch down to the incoming waves.

RICHARD gets out of the car, fingering through the keys on his ring. HARRY gets out more slowly.

RICHARD pauses to point off to the left, like a tourguide.

RICHARD
My summer house is up that way. You can't quite see it from here.

150 CONTINUED 150

RICHARD (continues)
Comfort House is what I call it; amusingly vulgar, don't you think?

HARRY
Is Becky in there?

RICHARD
Nothing in here byt some tools and equipment, a small portable generator...and my windbreaker. Patience, dear boy.

He finds the right key, opens the door, and ducks inside. A moment later he returns with the windbreaker tossed casually over one shoulder. He points toward the beach with his free hand.

RICHARD
Down this way.

HARRY (looking)
I don't see anything down there but the beach.

RICHARD (benign)
You will. Come on.

HARRY
Aren't you going to lock the shed?

RICHARD (slightly impatient)
No need. Come on; the maiden fair awaits.

They begin to walk away. THE CAMERA goes through the open shed door and looks around. We see the generator he has mentioned, and a litter of tools, and most surprising of all, perhaps, a lot of TV equipment: a color camera with lots of flex cable, a videocassette recorder, a small TV set.

151 EXT. ON THE BEACH (NO PUN INTENDED) DAY 151

RICHARD and HARRY are walking down through the sand. SOUNDS of wind and waves are quite loud now. The wind ruffles through their hair. Ahead we see a large pile of beach-sand with a shovel driven into it. This is what they are walking toward.

RICHARD (conversational)
I once figured out that I own almost

151 CONTINUED 151

RICHARD (continues)
seventy per cent of Comfort Point, Harry. Isn't that amazing?

HARRY
What's that pile of sand? Is it--

RICHARD (good-humored)
The burial-mound of the lady fair? Nothing so satisfyingly Republic serial, I'm afraid. But you will be interested in it, I think. Take a look.

HARRY approaches it anxiously; RICHARD now lags slightly behind. Beyond the pile of beach-sand and the hole, we can see the discarded blue plastic beach-pail (sc. 144). HARRY looks down into the hole.

152 EXT. THE HOLE, HARRY'S POV DAY 152

The hole is about five feet deep. There is something nasty and ominous about it. The sides ooze moisture, and there is a puddle of water in the bottom.

RICHARD (voice)
Notice the water, Harry. Even with the tide out, water creeps in. The smallest child with his first sand-pail notices that. How the water oozes into a hole. Even when the tide is out.

153 EXT. THE BEACH, WITH HARRY DAY 153

He looks up from the hole. Turns to face RICHARD.

HARRY
All right, you've had your fun. Now where--

He stops abruptly. THE CAMERA PULLS BACK. RICHARD is pointing a pistol at him. He undoubtedly picked it up in the equipment shed and concealed it under the wind-breaker.

HARRY
I think this has gone just about far enough.

RICHARD
Not nearly far enough, Harry my boy. Let me assure you.

153 CONTINUED 153

HARRY begins to tense; his hands curl into fists.

RICHARD
I can see you getting ready to jump me, Harry, just like the hero in a Saturday matinee. You might even manage to overpower me--I'd put the odds at about one in twenty-five. But before you try playing Randolph Scott or Audie Murphy, I suggest you consider your beloved Rebecca.

We see the uncertainty on HARRY'S face again; he simply doesn't know what to do.

RICHARD
It's perfect, you know. A perfect box. And you're in it. If you leap at me, I'm going to shoot you and there will be absolutely no one to rescue the lady fair. If you should hit that one lucky chance--Bingo! give that man a turkey--I will still not tell you where Becky is. You see the box, Harry? You do, don't you? Poor Harry.

HARRY
What do you want me to do?

RICHARD
All in good time. I thought Becky would bring you this far, and she did. But there comes a point where love and all that perfumed rot about maidens fair and knights on horseback gives way to the putrid scent of self-interest. That's why I brought the persuader. Now be a good boy and get into the hole, Harry.

HARRY looks into the hole, then back at RICHARD. For the first time he looks really afraid.

HARRY
No.

RICHARD cocks the pistol.

RICHARD
Yes.

153 CONTINUED (2) 153

HARRY
No.

RICHARD
All right. I'm shooting you now. Sorry.

He levels the pistol. HARRY jumps quickly into the hole. There's a squashy splashing SOUND as his feet hit the water. RICHARD laughs delightedly. And at the risk of belaboring a point that may be obvious, something is happening to HARRY; he is losing the commanding air he had earlier. This is no John Wayne hero but a real man, and where earlier he has only been RICHARD'S physical prisoner, he is now becoming a psychological prisoner as well. There is something relentlessly terrible, nightmarish, about all of this.

HARRY
What now, Vickers?

RICHARD
Make it Richard. That's so much more friendly.

HARRY
All right...Richard. What now?

RICHARD
You can just reach the sand from where you are. Start pulling it into the hole.

HARRY
Uh-uh. No way.

RICHARD (patient)
I have no intention of burying you alive, dear Harry. None whatever. I intend to incapacitate you, that's all. And then you can see Becky. I promise you that.

HARRY
I don't believe you.

RICHARD
No? But I never break my promises.

HARRY
I still don't believe you.

153 CONTINUED (3) 153

RICHARD
But I have the gun? Don't I?

HARRY (suddenly screams)
HELP! HELP! HEELLLLP!

RICHARD (laughing)
As they also used to say in the old Alfred Hitchcock TV programs: scream all you want. There's no one to hear you. Ah, how life imitates art. (He stops laughing abruptly) Now start pulling that sand into the hole, or I'll put a hole in your head.

RICHARD raises the gun again. HARRY looks up at him helplessly...and then begins to pull sand into the hole.

154 EXT. THE SURF DAY 154

Well, maybe not exactly surf; waves. They are starting to come in. The tide is on the turn. It has begun to move up the beach.

155 EXT. HARRY AND RICHARD DAY 155

HARRY is standing in the hole. He is in sand to just above his knees. He is pulling more sand in, but slowly. Every now and then he glances at the water. The fact that the hole he is standing in is well below the high-tide line is not lost on him...or us.

RICHARD stands back out of reach, with the gun.

RICHARD
Now stop.

HARRY stops immediately and looks up at RICHARD, questioning.

RICHARD
Put your hands at your sides. As if you were standing at attention on a parade-ground.

HARRY
Now wait just a minute--

RICHARD begins to raise the gun again. HARRY quickly puts his hands at his sides. RICHARD begins to push sand into the hole with the side of his foot. Flump...flump...flump.

155 CONTINUED 155

HARRY'S fingers start to disappear into the sand. He pulls them up.

HARRY (frightened)
Enough, goddammit, ENOUGH!

RICHARD (great sincerity)
Now listen to me, Harry. I believe that we've gotten to know each other this morning; I believe that we're well on our way to becoming good friends. But I tell you this for the absolutely final time: put your arms against your sides, or I am going to blow your head off. That is irrevocable. Let me strongly suggest that you exercise wisdom in this matter and decide to live a little longer. After all... where there's life, there's hope. It's up to you, now. My patience is at an end.

After a moment--a brief moment--HARRY puts his arms to his sides again. RICHARD begins footing sand into the hole again. He walks around HARRY in a deliberate, almost ritualistic, circle, filling the hole with sand. HARRY'S fingers disappear; his hands; his wrists; his forearms. The sand is thigh-deep, then waist-deep, then stomach-deep. HARRY'S arms are now buried up to the elbows.

HARRY (weakly)
Richard...

RICHARD (benign)
What is it, Harry?

HARRY
Please.

RICHARD
I'm sorry?

HARRY
PLEASE.

RICHARD
Couldn't quite hear you. The tide's coming in, you know. Waves are getting loud.

155 CONTINUED (2) 155

HARRY
PLEASE, FOR THE LOVE OF GOD, DON'T...! (Pause; then he speaks in a slightly more reasonable voice) Not over my chest...I won't be able to breathe. The sand's...heavy.

RICHARD
I'm sure it is. Very heavy. Wet sand is very heavy. But you'll be able to breathe. With some difficulty, of course, but you'll be able to breathe.

RICHARD begins footing sand into the hole again. Flump. Flump. Flump.

156 EXT. THE WATER DAY 156

Wavelets running up the beach; the SOUND of crying gulls and the relentless SOUND of the crashing waves.

THE CAMERA DRAWS BACK and we see, about five hundred feet up from the waves' furthest current run, ascene very similar to the one which opened this story: HARRY is buried right up to the chin, a claustrophobe's nightmare.

RICHARD is on his hands and knees, patting the sand down firmly around his chin and jawline. The gun lies on the firm sand some few feet away. It is no longer necessary.

HARRY is broken. His eyes roll in utter, mad terror.

HARRY (wheezing)
Richard...please...I can't...can't get my breath...

RICHARD (falsely soothing)
I know; it's hard, isn't it? Like being buried in wet cement. But what's worse is that you can't move your arms away from your sides, can you? There's no leverage. All that sand...pressing in on you... and you can't move at all. Try, Harry. Try to move.

We see HARRY'S face contort with effort. He strains. Nothing.

HARRY (hoarse)
Let me out, Richard. I...I'll go

156 CONTINUED 156

HARRY (continues)
away, if that's what you want. Only don't hurt her.

RICHARD picks up a handful of sand and trickles it down on HARRY'S head. HARRY closes his eyes. Sand sticks to his face, itching, maddening. Nothing he can do about it.

RICHARD (idly)
I could just cover you up all the way, couldn't I, dear Harry?

He begins to move more sand, now covering HARRY'S mouth; it's almost up to his nostrils...

RICHARD
Oh that would be nasty, wouldn't it?

Abruptly he pulls the sand away from HARRY'S face.

RICHARD
Except that I promised I wouldn't. And whether you believed it or not, I always keep my promises... to the letter. You want to see something amusing?

HARRY'S eyes roll in terror. He sneezes out sand. RICHARD picks up the gun and rolls the cylinder out. He spins it. All six chambers are empty.

RICHARD (triumphantly)
I bluffed you, Harry.

He stands up, and now the scene is just as it was in the opening, complete to the shadow.

HARRY (terror)
Where are you going? Don't leave me like this!

RICHARD (voice)
Oh, I'll be back before the tide comes in...

We FLASH FORWARD into the present, RICHARD'S last words--"before the tide comes in"--echoing over and over; and we DISSOLVE TO:

157 EXT. THE INCOMING TIDE DAY 157

It has almost reached the blue plastic sandbucket; in fact, as we watch, one of the expiring wavelets actually touches it.

158 EXT. HARRY DAY 158

He's struggling to get out--fruitlessly. He gives it up and closes his eyes. Just then, a gull flutters down nearby. HARRY opens his eyes again at the sound.

HARRY
Get out of here!

The gull flutters its wings a little at the sound of his voice, but that's all. It seems to know he's helpless. It struts toward him. Its beak seems very sharp, and HARRY'S face registers fear.

HARRY
Go on! Get out!

The gull comes closer. Abruptly it slashes at HARRY'S cheek, leaving a thin smear of blood.

HARRY (bellows)
GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE!!

The bird flies off with a startled squawk. HARRY'S head --all of him that we can see--sags back for a moment. Then he looks at the waves again with fresh terror.

Now we hear the SOUND of approaching footsteps through the sand. A voice--RICHARD'S--singing "Camptown Races." HARRY looks around, and registers some surprise.

HARRY
What--

RICHARD
You'll see. Fear not, dear boy.

RICHARD enters the frame. He is unrolling a drum of electrical cable on the sand--two cables, actually, side by side. One of them ends near where HARRY is buried chin-deep. There is an alligator-clip connector on the end of it. RICHARD continues on, unrolling the other cable, which we might recognize as a standard coaxial cable--the sort people use with their video systems.

HARRY (fighting panic)
Listen, Richard. You've made your point. I'm scared, I admit it. If you'll only--

RICHARD
Patience, dear boy. Have patience. High tide at 12:14 this afternoon, and it's almost nine now. I suspect

158 CONTINUED 158

RICHARD (continues)
the tide will be up to you by eleven-thirty or so, eleven-forty-five at the latest, so don't slow me down.

HARRY
Richard--!

But RICHARD goes on, unreeling the electrical cable and singing "Camptown Races." HARRY looks after him desperately.

159 EXT. THE INCOMING TIDE DAY 159

Waves are splashing regularly over the blue pail now. As we look, one of them frees it from the sand and it goes floating away.

THE CAMERA PANS UP TO HARRY--and it's not a very long pan, either. The tide is getting close. HARRY looks at the small waves running up the beach, and then turns to look at something else.

160 EXT. THE ELECTRICAL CABLE DAY 160

The eye of the CAMERA follows it, black against the white of the beach sand. It goes about six hundred feet down the beach and around a jutting point of land and out of sight.

161 EXT. THE BEACH, FEATURING A CRAB DAY 161

Nasty thing, scuttling along. The CAMERA follows it, and then HARRY is in the frame, looking at the crab with real horror.

HARRY
Oh God, get out of here--

The crab scuttles closer. HARRY shouts at it. The crab pauses, then comes on. Like the gull, it appears to sense his helplessness. It does not try to bite him or to tear off a chunk with its claws, but after a moment it begins to crawl on him, up the back of his neck and into his hair.

HARRY begins to scream.

A shadow falls over him; RICHARD leans down and picks the crab out of HARRY'S hair and tosses it away.

161 CONTINUED 161

RICHARD
It's just getting revenge for all the times you sat down to a plate of baked, stuffed crab at Twenty-One, dear boy.

HARRY'S nerve is entirely shot, now; indeed, it would not be too much to say that whatever remains of his sanity is held together by only one or two fraying cords. He babbles at RICHARD with no sense of dignity or restraint.

HARRY
Please, Richard, anything, I'll go away, I'll stay away, money, I have money, if only you'll just ...just...LET ME OUT OF THIS HOLE, RICHARD, FOR THE LOVE OF CHRIST, LET ME OUT...THE TIDE...THE TIDE IS--

RICHARD
Yes, the tide is coming in rather fast now, isn't it? We'll have to hurry.

Quite suddenly he plonks a small portable TV down on the sand right in front of HARRY'S eyes--not more than six inches from his nose, in fact. It's one of those cheap Japanese jobs, battery-powered.

RICHARD (fake impresario's voice, ridiculously enthused)
Iiiiit's...SHOWTIME!

HARRY (moaning)
Richard...please...

The expiring wavelets are now no more than twenty feet from where HARRY is buried to the chin. His eyes bulge and roll between them and RICHARD. RICHARD is now attaching the cord with the alligator-clip to the back of the TV.

This done, he squats to one side, looking at HARRY.

RICHARD
As someone who works in TV, I have access to all this stuff first. Some of it is truly amazing. "State of the art," they call it.

HARRY (screaming)
LET ME OUT! LET ME OUT! LET ME--

161 CONTINUED (2) 161

RICHARD puts a finger to HARRY'S lips.

RICHARD
Shhhh! Perhaps you will get out, Harry. I rather doubt it, but there is at least an outside chance. But you have to be quiet...you have to listen closely. Because the tide is very close now, and I'll only have a chance to say this once. You understand?

HARRY does quiet. His eyes, large, tear-stained, and utterly mad, are fixed on RICHARD'S

RICHARD

The main cable goes back that way to the equipment-shed you saw earlier, where it's hooked into a video-deck. Another cable goes overland from beyond that point to the same place. The overland cable is hooked into a Sony color camera--all to bring you this, dear boy.

RICHARD turns on the TV.

162 EXT. THE TV SCREEN DAY 162

The picture comes up--picture and SOUND. We are looking at a woman's head--BECKY'S head. It also seems to rest, disembodied, on the sand, because she also has been buried up to the chin. Her long dark hair draggles around her. It's wet, because the tide is already sending small waves around her; she has to tilt her head to keep her nose above them.

She is screaming.

163 EXT. ON THE BEACH, WITH RICHARD AND HARRY DAY 163

HARRY
Becky! Oh dear God! Becky!

RICHARD
I'm sorry. She can't see you or hear you. I could have worked that out, I suppose, with a little more time. But I didn't have it. You see that the tide has already reached her...as it will reach

163 CONTINUED 163

RICHARD (continues)
you in another five or ten minutes.

Tinny screams from the TV monitor as the waves continue to rise around BECKY. A particularly large one covers her for a moment and then she's revealed again, spluttering, shrieking.

RICHARD turns the volume down.

RICHARD
I promised you'd see her again, Harry. And I always keep my promises.

HARRY
You bastard! Bastard! Bastard! Bastard!

When RICHARD speaks now, it is with none of the previous light mockery. He is utterly serious...and utterly mad.

RICHARD
You might be able to get out, Harry. Yes. A remote possibility, but a real one. The tide itself might free you, the way it freed that blue sandbucket. If you can keep calm. If you can keep from screaming when the water covers you, so cold, so salty. As you wait for it to go out so you can take one quick breath before the next wave comes in. Yes, there's a chance... if you keep your head. I believe she's lost hers, don't you?

He turns up the SOUND on the TV again. BECKY is screaming in choked half-gasps, snorting water, twisting her head wildly. A particularly big wave comes crashing in and covers her entirely. When it retreats, her head only lolls limply, her hair flowing around her like seaweed.

RICHARD
Feel how hard your heart is beating, Harry? How fast? It makes it hard to hold your breath, doesn't it?

He stands, looks at his watch...and the first wave creeps up to HARRY, not quite touching him, but dampening the sand in front of him. HARRY recoils from it in horror.

163 CONTINUED (2) 163

RICHARD (light again)
My, how late it's getting! I must trot, Harry...enjoy the show.

He starts away.

HARRY
NO! COME BACK! COME BACK! DON'T LEAVE ME HERE! COME BAAAACK--!!

RICHARD
No, I really can't stay--but if you do happen to get free, Harry, come and see me. But don't count on the gun being unloaded a second time, will you?

RICHARD walks away up the beach. HARRY begins to scream for him to come back, and a wave rolls into his mouth, causing him to splutter and choke. He faces into the waves, and another one surfs over his mouth and around his cheeks and ears...then withdraws.

164 EXT. THE TV DAY 164

We can't even see BECKY anymore; only swirling black hair on top of the restless water.

A fresh wave comes in, rolls around the TV, and it shorts out with a buzzing, snapping SOUND.

165 EXT. HARRY AND THE TIDE DAY 165

Exactly how this would be shot is entirely a directorial matter. For perhaps as long as a minute (to the audience, hopefully, it will seem much longer) we watch HARRY deal with the incoming tide; we see his head buried under the oncoming waves, we see him emerge again, we see him struggling to free himself. Perhaps we even have some underwater stuff--HARRY with his hair waiving, his eyes open, bubbles coming from his mouth; the bubbly under-water sounds of HARRY screaming? The audience should live his struggle to survive, on the edge of its collective seat...the harsh, tearing SOUNDS of his breaths as the waves recede, the back-tilt of his head for a final gulp as the fresh waves--always bigger--come in.

We last see him underwater, still imprisoned in his hole, eyes bulging madly into the CAMERA, cheeks puffed out.

With the issue still in doubt, we CUT TO:

166 EXT. UNDERWATER, ON THE BEACH DAY 166

We see the portable TV rolling slowly along what was the beach and what will be, for the next six hours or so, the ocean floor. Behind it, trailing out lazily and rather beautifully, is the coaxial cable.

167 EXT. THE BEACH, LONG SHOT DAY 167

From this angle we can see all of Comfort Point--the waves rolling in on the beach one after another. We hear the SOUND of the breakers. DISSOLVE TO:

168 EXT. THE BEACH SUNSET 168

The tide is out again, and the sunset is colorfully reflected on the slick mud near the water.

We hear someone--RICHARD--approaching, whistling "Camptown Races." The swishing SOUND of his feet in the sand, and the steady chunk-chunk sound of something being dug into the sand at irregular intervals.

RICHARD enters the frame. He's changed to a red and black strappy t-shirt and clamdiggers. He has a shovel in one hand. He walks for a bit, then pauses and looks around. Sees something. Starts toward it.

169 EXT. FURTHER DOWN THE BEACH, NEAR THE WATER 169
SUNSET

The corner of something is poking out of the wet sand; just the corner. RICHARD reaches it and uses the shovel to excavate it. It's the portable TV. He sets it on the sand, rises to his feet, and begins to cast carefully about--looking for HARRY'S remains.

170 EXT. THE BEACH, RICHARD'S POV SUNSET 170

He walks around, looking for some sign of HARRY. His smug expression of expectation gradually changes to perplexity, and perplexity to a qualified unease. There is simply nothing.

At last he comes back to the portable TV and looks out toward the dark ocean.

RICHARD
Current. (Pause) Current pulled him out. (Pause) Pulled them both out.

171 CONTINUED 171

Still; he looks uneasy. After a bit, he begins to walk back the way he came, taking the TV with him.

THE CAMERA MOVES to the ocean and holds there--the waves coming in with the darkness; the tide on the turn again.

172 EXT. COMFORT HOUSE NIGHT 172

We get a silhouette against the night sky here, but not much more. This is a tall, angular house, hideously Victorian with gables and gambrels and turrets--maybe even a cupola. Any resemblance to the Norman Bates "Psycho-house" is purely intentional.

In the background, we hear the SOUND of waves.

Upstairs, a single light goes on.

173 INT. A BEDROOM NIGHT 173

This is the room of a pure hedonist or of a man who spent too much time reading the "Living" section of PLAYBOY magazine as a kid. White rug, thick enough to breast-stroke through. A Mural-Vision TV on the wall. Water-bed. Art deco lights, etc.

RICHARD is standing back-to the CAMERA, looking out into the night--at the ocean, we presume. He's unbuttoning his shirt. He turns away from the window, takes his shirt off, and drops it casually in a basket chair suspended from a chain. But his face isn't casual. His unease is slightly more evident now.

RICHARD
The undertow took them, good riddance, get off it, why don't you?

He starts for the bathroom. There is a faint SOUND--we don't know what, but RICHARD hears it, too. He stops, cocking his head, then goes on again. He turns on the bathroom flourescents and closes the door.

174 EXT. THE FRONT STEPS OF COMFORT HOUSE NIGHT 174

The SOUND of the incoming tide is louder.

Although it is dark, we can see wet shoeprints on the steps leading up to the porch--shoeprints and something else. A few strands of kelp and seaweed.

THE CAMERA PANS SLOWLY UP to the porch...more tracks, and now we hear slow footsteps on the boards--

175 INT. THE BATHROOM NIGHT 175

THE CAMERA takes a slow look around. Here are RICHARD'S shoes and socks; here his clamdiggers, his underwear shorts. Shaving stuff is set out on the basin.

The SOUND of the shower, drumming loudly. And RICHARD is singing "Camptown Races" again.

176 INT. THE FRONT HALL OF COMFORT HOUSE NIGHT 176

THE CAMERA MOVES SLOWLY IN on the front door. The knob is turning slowly clockwise. There is a click. The door begins to swing open. There is a faint squeal of hinges.

177 INT. IN THE SHOWER NIGHT 177

RICHARD is well lathered up, singing away. Despite the SOUNDS of the shower and his singing, we hear the SOUND of the squeaking hinges...faint, but audible. RICHARD hears it, too.

He stops singing, and the unease fills his face--no, fear. Now it's fear. He reaches out and shuts off the shower. No SOUND now but water dripping from him and, faintly, the crash of the waves coming in.

He listens for some time, then throws open the door of the shower stall and gets out (maybe we expected something horrible to be there, waiting for him, but there is nothing). He grabs his robe off the back of the door, pulls it on, and opens the door to the bedroom.

He starts across, gets halfway, and stops again. The fear on his face is acute, now.

We hear a new SOUND--creaking treads. Someone--or something--is slowly mounting the stairs.

RICHARD (hoarse; frightened)
Who's there?

The SOUNDS cease. There's silence except for the faint beat of the surf. RICHARD stands, indecisive and terrified.

178 INT. THE STAIRS NIGHT 178

THE CAMERA PANS SLOWLY up them. More wet shoetracks. Kelp and seaweed. THE CAMERA reaches the feet and we see them for just a second before they move on--time enough to register that there are two pairs of them, a man's (in wet loafers, clotted with sand and seaweed)

178 CONTINUED 178

and a woman's (low-heeled sandals, also wet and dirty). Then they move on; the SOUND of creaking floorboards resumes.

179 INT. THE BEDROOM NIGHT 179

RICHARD is pawing open the drawer of his nighttable, now in terror. He pulls out the gun we saw earlier, and a box of cartridges. He sits on the bed and loads it fumblingly, alternating glances at the cylinder with glances at his bedroom door.

The SOUNDS of creaking boards are getting louder; they are coming in this direction.

With the gun loaded, he stands up.

RICHARD (almost hysterical)
Is that you, Wentworth?

The creaking SOUNDS continue.

RICHARD
I've got the gun. And it's loaded this time, dear boy. Believe it! I suggest you simply leave the way you came--

He breaks off, eyes widening. The doorknob of the room is now turning. Slowly. Slowly.

RICHARD (shrill)
Don't come in here! It's loaded! I'll shoot you! I warn you, Wentworth! I'll shoot you dead!

The knob has reached full cock. There is a long pause, and then the door opens slowly. RICHARD screams. Well he might. Standing in the doorway are HARRY and BECKY. They are ghastly, livid white. Their clothes are wet and dripping and there's seaweed and kelp on both of them --on their clothes, in their hair. BECKY stares at RICHARD with a kind of hideous, drugged avidity. So does HARRY, but only with one eye; the other is a blank socket. Lunch for the crabs, perhaps. They begin to shuffle forward, leaving water and seaweed behind.

They squelch as they walk.

HARRY
You can't shoot us dead, Richard. Because we're already dead.

179 CONTINUED 179

BECKY (dreamily)
Already dead. Yes, already dead.

RICHARD begins to scream--and he screams through the rest of the scene. He begins to fire the pistol, and we can see the bullets going home, but the bullets don't stop the advance of HARRY and BECKY.

He begins to back away toward the bathroom, still shooting. There comes the inevitable moment, however, when the SOUND of bullets becomes the dry click-click-click of an empty gun.

He throws it at BECKY and it strikes her face. There is no blood, however; only a terrible livid gash. They are quite close to him now; HARRY gropes for him.

Screaming, RICHARD darts into the bathroom and slams the door.

180 INT. THE BATHROOM NIGHT 180

As RICHARD slams the door, HARRY reaches through. There is a crunching SOUND, and HARRY'S hand is severed; it drops to the tiled floor.

RICHARD turns the bolt and retreats, mad with horror, until his back is against the washstand. The doorknob begins to turn back and forth. HARRY and BECKY begin to pound on the door.

181 INT. OUTSIDE THE BATHROOM DOOR NIGHT 181

We are close-up on BECKY. She is pounding steadily on the door. Close-up she looks simply dreadful, with her hair plastered against her face. She has already begun to moulder.

BECKY
Let us in, Richard...let us in,
Richard...let us in, Richard...

182 INT. THE BATHROOM NIGHT 182

Below the pounding, a subtle scratching SOUND. RICHARD looks down and begins to scream again.

183 INT. THE BATHROOM FLOOR NIGHT 183

The severed hand, discolored, wet, clotted with sand, has begun to crawl across the floor toward RICHARD. His foot comes down on it...again...again...again...splintering

183 CONTINUED 183

it, mashing it. At last it lies still. It looks like a huge, grotesque spider that has been squashed.

184 INT. THE BATHROOM, WITH RICHARD NIGHT 184

He's insane with terror. He kicks the squashed hand away.

185 INT. THE BEDROOM NIGHT 185

We see that BECKY is at the bathroom door alone, pounding. But a moment later HARRY re-enters the bedroom from the hall. He has found a large axe somewhere. BECKY stands aside. HARRY moves slowly toward the locked bathroom door.

HARRY
We want to see you, Richard...

BECKY
Yes, we want to see you, Richard...

HARRY
We dug a hole for you, Richard...

BECKY
Yes, on the beach, below the tide-line...

HARRY
Here we come, Richard...

He raises the axe and swings it. It splinters its way through the door.

186 INT. THE BATHROOM NIGHT 186

The axe is withdrawn, but a moment later it comes down again, widening the hole. We can see them outside now; so can RICHARD, who is in the last extremity of horror.

He wheels to the medicine cabinet abruptly and claws it open. He paws through the stuff and finds a safety razor. He unscrews it and removes the blade. He holds it, glances wildly at the disintegrating door again, then down...

187 INT. THE BATHROOM FLOOR NIGHT 187

Teh magled hand is beginning to twitch and move again.

188 INT. THE BATHROOM, WITH RICHARD NIGHT 188

For RICHARD, that decides it. Even as BECKY reaches

188 CONTINUED 188

through the hole in the door, groping for the lock, he slashes the razorblade across his throat, and as the blood begins to gush:

189 RED SCREEN 189

This total red DISSOLVES SLOWLY TO:

190 EXT. THE OCEAN NIGHT 190

It's moving gently, a path of silver beaten across it by the moonlight. We hear the gentle, almost soporific SOUND of breaking waves.

191 EXT. THE BEACH NIGHT 191

This scene is lit by the eerie, still glow of moonlight. We see RICHARD, buried up to above his shoulders in beach sand. His head lolls bonelessly backward, revealing the deep, clotted slit in his neck. His open eyes are glazed, full of moonlight.

THE CAMERA HOLDS on this for a moment, and then very slowly MOVES toward the water.

Leading away from the place where RICHARD'S body has been placed is a double line of footprints. They go down the beach until they are lost in the wavelets of the incoming tide.

FREEZE-FRAME. The FREEZE-FRAME becomes a comic picture. As previously, the SOUNDS of rain and faint thunder come up, and a few drops of rain spatter down on the open CREEPSHOW comic book. We can also hear the SOUND of water rushing down the gutter and swirling into the storm-drain.

The pages flutter and turn over. On the left is a full-page Artist-of-the-Month feature, such as the old Comics used to run; in this one we see the smiling, bearded face of GEORGE ROMERO, along with a lot of copy which we will not have the time to read.

On the right is the Letters-to-the-Editor page--under the CREEPSHOW logo, of course. We may see letters about MARTIN, about 'SALEM'S LOT,' about NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD--possibly about other things as well. All of them rather fawning and superficial, as the letters to the old comics magazines so frequently tended to be.

Before we can see much, the wind flutters this page over as well.

191 CONTINUED 191

Now on the left is a full-page ad for mail-order Venus Flytrap bulbs (LEARN MORE OF NATURE'S WONDERFUL SECRETS! FEED IT HAMBURGER, LIVE BUGS!).

On the righthand side, we see the splash-page for the fifth and final story of the cycle.

THE CAMERA MOVES IN and we see a comic picture of an elderly man in a nice bathrobe crouched in the corner of a rich-looking living-room. Prominent in the foreground is a touch-tone telephone on a desk littered with papers. Behind and to the right is a large picture-window, giving on a view of New York City at night.

The elderly man--UPSON PRATT--has an aerosol can in one hand, and a white cloud of spray is issuing from it. The elderly party's expression is grim almost to the point of viciousness.

The title of this story is THEY'RE CREEPING UP ON YOU.

The SOUNDS of the storm fade out; the printed matter fades out; the comic drawing becomes a FREEZE-FRAME which comes to life.

We hear the hissing SOUND of the aerosol can, and see the white stuff rise. PRATT rises to his feet with an ugly but satisfied grunt. The telephone rings, and he crosses to it and picks it up.

He speaks with an ugly, hectoring bark--PRATT'S usual tone of voice. He is of that peculiar genus (of which public myth has assured us...not to mention the works of Harold Robbins), the Monstrous Millionaire--possibly Billionaire.

PRATT
Hello? Super?

GEORGE
No, Mr. Pratt. It's George Gendron.

PRATT
I called the Super! Damned fools downstairs told me he was on vacation. I told them I wanted a call from him within the hour whether he was on vacation or not. Within the hour. He now has--(glances at his watch) --twenty-six minutes to go. Or he can stay on vacation permanently. I own the goddam building. Which

191 CONTINUED (2) 191

PRATT (continues)
means I own HIM. Never forget that, George.

GEORGE
Nossir.

PRATT
What the hell are you doing in the office at nine-thirty, George? No overtime at the executive level, you know.

He cackles.

GEORGE (patient)
It's only six-thirty on the west coast, sir. The Pacific Aerodyne takeover--

PRATT
Oh, bugger Pacific Aerodyne! They're gone, they'd had it, Norman Castonmeyer is a fucking dinosaur who doesn't know enough to find a tarpit. Do you know what I found in the corner, George? Do you? Do you know what I found in the corner of my $1600-a-month penthouse apartment? Do you?

GEORGE (resigned)
Nossir.

PRATT (nearly screaming)
I FOUND A ROACH! THAT'S RIGHT, A COCKROACH! THIS IS THE THIRD TIME, GEORGE! AND I...WON'T...HAVE IT!

GEORGE
I called to tell you that the Pratt Corporation now owns a majority of Pacific Aerodyne stock--

PRATT
Of course we do! You know what's going to happen going in or you don't go in...how many times have I told you that?...George, I'm going to have to hang up. Keep the line open for the Super. I'm not going to have bugs in my building. I loathe bugs.

191 CONTINUED (3) 191

GEORGE
Yessir, I know you do.

PRATT looks around his lovely apartment, and there is a harried, phobic expression on his face for a moment.

PRATT
Loathe them.

Pause.

GEORGE
Mr. Pratt, Sir?

PRATT (impatient)
WHAT, for Chrissake?

GEORGE
Norman Castonmeyer shot himself an hour ago, sir. When it became clear that there was no way to stop the takeover. He shot himself through the right eye. (Pause) He's dead.

There's silence for a moment. Then, suddenly (and perhaps shockingly), PRATT bursts into delighted cackles of laughter.

PRATT
Wonderful! Now we won't have to offer the old MENSCH a chair on the board of directors!

GEORGE (shocked)
But the scandal...

PRATT
Oh, scandal my cracked ass! You mean the STINK, George! The SMELL. Business always smells, George, and the bigger the business, the bigger the smell. A really big deal stinks like a dead tuna three days in the sun. We can bear up under the smell.

GEORGE
Yessir, but...

PRATT
Send his widow flowers, George. In my name, if you like. Now get off

191 CONTINUED (4) 191

PRATT (continues)
the phone. The super only has twenty-four minutes left.

GEORGE
Yessir.

PRATT
Once you get bugs, you never get rid of them, George. They breed in the crawlspaces...the conduits... the very core of the building. Goodbye, George.

GEORGE
Goodnight, Mr. Pratt.

PRATT slams the phone down. He stands for a moment, then pulls open one drawer of the desk. From it he takes a matchbox. He dumps out the matches. He takes the empty box and goes to the fireplace. From the rack of tools he takes a small ornamental shovel and goes back over to the corner where we originally saw him.

192 INT. IN THE CORNER NIGHT 192

Lying dead in the corner on its armored little back is a good-sized cockroach. The little ornamental shovel comes into the frame and scoops up the roach.

193 INT. PRATT NIGHT 193

Working carefully, he tilts up the small shovel. The body of the cockroach falls into the matchbox. We see it in there quite clearly before he slides the box closed. On PRATT'S face is an expression of loathing and horror. PRATT speaks to the dead roach.

PRATT
You and your kind are not going to take over my building.

He stands, returns the shovel to the rack of fire-tools, and takes the matchbox over to the desk. He speaks as he does these things--and by now we'll hopefully see him as enough of an eccentric so that this speaking aloud doesn't seem queer or contrived.

PRATT
Castonmeyer shot himself! Good riddance! Good fucking riddance! Just another roach. Just another ...bug.

193 CONTINUED 193

He looks at the matchbox with loathing.

The phone rings. PRATT snatches it up.

PRATT
Hello! Talk to me!

REYNOLDS
It's Carl Reynolds, sir. I'm calling from Orlando--

PRATT
From WHERE?

REYNOLDS
Orlando, Florida, Mr. Pratt. The wife and I decided to take the kids to DisneyWorld this year--

PRATT
Fuck your kids! Do you know what I found up here? A cockroach! It's the third time something like this has happened, Reynolds! First a spider...a big one...and then some kind of beetle...and now a fucking COCKROACH! Do you like your job, Reynolds?

REYNOLDS
Sir, I've spoken to Mr. White, who's on the desk tonight--

PRATT
Do you like your job?

REYNOLDS (pause)
Yessir.

PRATT
Now, I'm glad to hear that. Because I want to see White, and not longer than half an hour after I see White, I want to see the exterminators. Do you understand me?

REYNOLDS
Mr. Pratt, it's almost quarter of ten--

PRATT (rides over him)
And if I don't see those things, you will HAVE no job by midnight

193 CONTINUED (2) 193

PRATT (continues)
tonight. Do you understand? And next year you can take your wife and kids to DisneyWorld on your fucking welfare check! Do you understand me, Reynolds? Do you follow? Are we together on this?

A long, long pause. When REYNOLDS speaks again, there is hate in his voice, held carefully in check.

REYNOLDS
Yes, sir.

194 INT. THE KITCHEN NIGHT 194

It's a room with all the amenities--Cuisinart, trash-masher, lots of Formica and chrome...all of it astringently neat. It's dimly lit by a single lamp in the breakfast nook.

PRATT (voice)
Good. I trust we are.

SOUND as he slams the phone down. THE CAMERA begins to move leisurely across the room toward the sink.

PRATT (voice; loathing)
Bugs. All of them. Bugs. But you have to watch them. That's why you'll never by any more than a jumped-up bellhop, George. You don't understand that. You have to watch them, because they creep up on you.

We hear SOUNDS from the living room: footsteps; a cabinet door being slid open; the clinking sound as neck of bottle touches rim of glass. PRATT is cutting himself off a piece of Mr. Jack Daniels' finest.

THE CAMERA has reached the sink. It looks in. For a moment we only see the spotless facing and the dark drain-hole. Then a bug comes out of the drain. It looks like a cockroach, but it's much bigger, and even uglier...if that's possible. Its carapace is greenish. It begins to trundle toward the side of the sink. A second bug comes out of the drain...then a pair...then a whole stream of them.

195 INT. THE LIVING ROOM NIGHT 195

PRATT stands at his big picture window, looking morosely out at New York, a drink in his hand.

195 CONTINUED 195

The doorbell rings. PRATT turns and strides across to the door. Looks through the loophole.

196 INT. WHITE, SEEN THROUGH THE LOOPHOLE (FISHEYE) NIGHT 196

WHITE is a black man--the assistant super--dressed in a good suit. Blue. Dark red tie.

197 INT. THE APARTMENT FOYER NIGHT 197

PRATT opens the door.

WHITE
Good evening, Mr. Pratt--

PRATT
About goddam time.

WHITE steps in.

WHITE (pleasantly)
Got bugs again, huh, Mr. Pratt?

PRATT
Look at this! I want you to look at this!

WHITE follows PRATT back to the desk. PRATT picks up the matchbox and hands it to WHITE.

PRATT
Look at that!

WHITE opens the matchbox and looks in for a long time. Then he closes it and hands it back.

WHITE
An empty matchbox, Mr. Pratt?

PRATT
What--?

He opens the box and looks in.

198 INT. THE MATCHBOX NIGHT 198

Empty.

199 INT. THE LIVING ROOM NIGHT 199

PRATT is absolutely furious.

199 CONTINUED 199

PRATT
It got out! It got out somehow! I got it with my bugspray, right over there in that corner! Put it in there with the fire-shovel. Must have only stunned it.

WHITE
Yessir.

There is a slight pause here. PRATT looks at WHITE. His (PRATT'S) face is twisted and ugly.

PRATT (barks)
Why are you looking at me that way?

In point of fact, WHITE'S face is utterly expressionless.

WHITE
What way, Mr. Pratt, sir?

PRATT
Like I was crazy!

WHITE
Pardon me, Mr. Pratt, sir. I don't think you're crazy, not at all. I was just trying to run down in my mind who has the twenty-four hour service. Fumigating service, that is. I believe...I believe that I could get Pirelli Brothers out here by...shall we say, eleven-thirty?

PRATT looks at him keenly, and for a long time. Then he nods slowly.

PRATT
You might go far, White. I've found that people like you often do, in service. (Pause) People of color. That will be fine.

WHITE
Thank you, Mr. Pratt, sir. I'll call them now.

PRATT
See that you do.

WHITE goes back to the door, opens it.

199 CONTINUED (2) 199

PRATT
White.

WHITE
Yessir, Mr. Pratt, sir.

PRATT
It must have only been stunned. It got out of the box somehow. Roaches are very quick. I know, because we had them in the place where I lived as a boy. Roaches, bedbugs, silverfish. Bugs. Rats, too. ey're quick. They can creep up on you. Little fuck-sticks.

WHITE (perfectly expressionless)
Yessir, Mr. Pratt.

He waits, but there is no more. PRATT has turned away, muttering, looking for the escaped roach. WHITE lets himself out, pulls the door closed behind him.

PRATT
They creep up if you let them.

He seizes the can of bugspray again and continues his hunt.

200 INT. THE BUILDING ELEVATOR NIGHT 200

The doors open and WHITE gets in. He now looks angry--furious. He doesn't so much push the lobby button as slam it. The doors start to close.

WHITE
I know who's got bugs. YOU got bugs, you honky asshole.

201 INT. THE SINK OF PRATT'S APARTMENT NIGHT 201

The drain is now vomiting an army of bugs. They are a living carpet on the bottom of the sink, and two wings have begun spreading out along the Formica counters. I want to emphasize that they aren't roaches or crabs or any other form of recognizable bug; they are only themselves, and they are repulsive.

From the other room, we hear the hsst! hsst! hsst! of the bugspray, and PRATT muttering.

202 INT. THE LIVING ROOM NIGHT 202

PRATT is walking along, bent-over, the line of the base-board heater, spraying the shite stuff inside.

The telephone rings. He walks over to it, snatches it up.

PRATT
Reynolds? White? Hello! Talk to me!

MRS. CASTONMEYER
I just called to tell you what a monster you are, Mr. Pratt. And how I will rejoice when you are finally dead.

Long pause. PRATT actually seems to brighten a bit at the sound of this weepy, oh-so-serious voice. It is a diversion.

PRATT
Who's this?

MRS. CASTONMEYER
I'm the wife of the man you...you MURDERED this afternoon.

PRATT actually smiles at this, baring yellowed dentures.

PRATT
Mrs. Castonmeyer! How are you?

MRS. CASTONMEYER (hysterical)
I hope they keep hell hot for you, you bastard! It wasn't enough for you to drive him to his knees with your bribes and your shortcuts and your pet Congressmen, was it? You had to kill him, as well! You monster! You demon!

PRATT
God-DAMN, its good to hear from you!

MRS. CASTONMEYER (weeping)
He came home and his eyes...his eyes ...were so dead...and I asked him what was wrong...what could be so bad to make his eyes...his eyes look that way...and he said just the one word before he went into his study...and ten minutes later I heard the shot... it was your name he said.

202 CONTINUED 202

PRATT
Yes, I heard from George Gendron that he went out with a bang.

MRS. CASTONMEYER is beaten. She's weeping so hard now that we can barely understand her.

MRS. CASTONMEYER
How many men have you destroyed? How many have you killed, you monster?

PRATT
Only the stupid ones, Mrs. Castonmeyer. The ones who handed me a knife and then stretched out their throats. The ones who overspent, the ones that undercapitalized, the ones that, you should pardon the term, fucked up. And now, if you'll excuse me--

203 INT. THE BASEBOARD HEATER IN THE LIVING ROOM 203
NIGHT

Now the bugs are coming out of the heater in droves--over and under it. They are marching across the rug. Toward PRATT.

PRATT (voice; continues)
--I've got a bug problem here, and I'll have to defer your charming conversation to a later time... around 1987, shall we say?

MRS. CASTONMEYER (screaming)
I HOPE YOU DIE SOON! I HOPE YOU GET A CANCER IN THE WORST PLACE! AND THAT YOU ROT IN HELL FOR ETERNITY!

THE CAMERA tracks the bugs, and now we can see PRATT'S shoes at the far right of the frame. They're getting close.

PRATT
Oh, by the way...I wonder if you'd tell me who gave you my private number? I'd like to fire him.

MRS. CASTONMEYER
IT WAS IN MY HUSBAND'S ADDRESS BOOK, YOU SON OF A BITCH!

203 CONTINUED 203

PRATT (regret)
Well, I can't fire him, can I? I fired him earlier today. Can't fire a man twice, can you? Unless you rehire him. And not even the unions require the rehiring of cheap, cowardly suicides. At least not y--

MRS. CASTONMEYER utters a inarticulate scream and clicks off. PRATT chuckles. The first wave of bugs have nearly reached his shoe. He moves away--unknowing, just in time.

204 INT. THE LOBBY DESK NIGHT 204

WHITE is sitting behind a modular desk. Outside, we see the street, with an occasional car passing. To WHITE'S right and left are banks of TV monitors--security stuff.

The switchboard buzzes, and WHITE answers the phone.

WHITE
This is the desk, may I help?

MRS. McCARTHY
Mr. White?

WHITE (bogus Irish accent)
Mrs. McCarthy, isn't it? Top of the evenin to ya, darlin. Seen any leprechauns up there in 1005?

The voice of MRS. McCARTHY is elderly but sprightly; there is just a bare lilt of the Irish in her voice. WHITE is smiling affectionately; we can see that he genuinely likes the old lady.

MRS. McCARTHY
Oh, you are a charmer, Mr. White. No leprechauns tonight, I'm afraid. But I've a bit of a problem...

WHITE
What's the trouble?

MRS. McCARTHY
The shower won't turn off, Mr. White. I think the handles are stuck just a little, but my arthritis is so bad tonight, and...

WHITE
I understand, Mrs. McCarthy, but

204 CONTINUED 204

WHITE (continues)
gee, I don't know. Frank didn't come in tonight and I'm all by myself.

MRS. McCARTHY
Oh...I see...

WHITE (mutters)
I went up for HIM...

MRS. McCARTHY
I beg pardon? It's a bit hard to hear...the shower...

WHITE
I said I'll come right up, darlin.

MRS. McCARTHY
Now, only if you're sure it's all right...

WHITE
I'll just shoot the bolt for a minute. It will be fine.

MRS. McCARTHY
Oh, I'm so glad. I've been afraid it might drip through and stain someone's ceiling.

WHITE
See you in just a minute, my darlin.

MRS. McCARTHY
Oh, you've kissed the Blarney Stone for sure, Mr. White.

He laughs, hangs up. Pushes a button. There is a thudding SOUND from the door. WHITE nods. Gets up and crosses to the elevators. Gets in. The doors slide shut.

205 INT. PRATT'S KITCHEN NIGHT 205

Oh my, this is indeed bad news. The sink is now full of squirming, repulsive bugs of many types...many of them quite big, some of them definitely spiderish. They are all over the floor as well. Some of them are climbing slowly up the fridge and the stove, black, moving splotches against the white enamel. Others are crawling under the folding doors that give on the living room.

206 INT. PRATT'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT 206

PRATT is standing at his big window, looking out at the night skyline. He's having a drink. His can of bug-spray is on a table to his left.

The carpet behind him is covered with bugs, all of them moving toward him. The legs of the table on which he has placed his pressure-can of Raid or whatever it is look almost padded--they are covered with writhing, advancing bugs.

PRATT (dreamily)
You see, Mrs. Castonmeyer, I grew up in the projects. In the TENEMENTS. I know a bug when I see one. And what you do with a bug is you spray it. Or squash it.

THE CAMERA MOVES UP. Above PRATT, on the rod which supports the drapes, several of the big, furry spider-things are crawling sluggishly.

207 INT. A BATHROOM, FEATURING TWO CHROMED SHOWER FAUCETS NIGHT 207

SOUND of the shower, drumming away.

Two brown hands enter the frame, grasp the faucets, and twist them. The drumming SOUND of the shower dies away to drips.

THE CAMERA DRAWS BACK to show us WHITE and MRS. McCARTHY. She's small, white-haired, green-eyed, smiling.

MRS. McCARTHY
Oh, thank you, Mr. White. You are a dear man.

WHITE (smiling)
So my mother always said, Mrs. McCarthy. Just you and her, however.

MRS. McCARTHY
Could I offer you a cup of tea and a piece of my apple-bread? Just made fresh today.

WHITE
If you plan to be up another hour, keep it warm for me. Luke's coming in to pull door-duty and I'll be freed up.

MRS. McCARTHY
That's a deal!

208 INT. THE TENTH FLOOR HALL NIGHT 208

WHITE is outside.

WHITE
I'll see you, beautiful.

MRS. McCARTHY
Oh, you've kissed the Stone for certain-sure!

He laughs as she closes the door and starts down the hall.

209 INT. PRATT'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT 209

He's still looking out at the skyline, but his drink is mostly gone. Behind him, his living room is a nauseating sea of bugs--creepy-crawlies of every possible description. Some are no bigger than the moon on your thumbnail; some are damn near as big as rats. They are silent, though. Silent. They are creeping up on him.

PRATT toasts the glowing New York skyline.

PRATT
Here's to you, Mr. and Mrs. Castonmeyer, and all the Mr. and Mrs. Castonmeyers of the world! May you continue to get buggered in perpetuity, and may you never wise up! SALUD!

He begins to drink...then stops abruptly.

PRATT
What--the--FUCK?

The lights of Manhattan are going out in large blocs--the lower West Side, the upper West Side, midtown; it's a blackout, and it's marching straight toward PRATT'S building.

PRATT (bellows)
OH FOR CHRIST'S SAKE!

210 INT. A BUILDING ELEVATOR NIGHT 210

WHITE is in the elevator by himself, whistling a bit. Thinking of warm apple-bread, maybe. Suddenly the lights go out and the elevator comes to a sudden halt.

WHITE
What the--?

210 CONTINUED 210

He tries a couple of switches. Nothing. One emergency light comes on, but no power. He thumbs the intercom switch.

WHITE
Hello! Hello, anybody! I'm stuck in the damn elevator!

211 INT. THE BUILDING LOBBY NIGHT 211

A couple of emergency lights have also gone on down here, but by and large it's pretty dark. Dark outside, too. From out there comes the SOUND of auto horns, blaring in confused cacaphony.

From the intercom comes WHITE'S voice:

WHITE
Hello! Somebody! What's going on? The elevator's stuck!

212 INT. PRATT'S KITCHEN NIGHT 212

A jungle of bugs. The surfaces are so furred with them that we can barely make out what things are. And all of them are squirming.

213 INT. PRATT'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT 213

PRATT is still at the window, drink in hand, marvelling at the darkened city.

PRATT
If it were my electric company, it never would have happened.

He toasts the darkened city, starts to raise his glass to his mouth, and then makes a half-gagging, half-screaming sound of distaste.

214 INT. PRATT'S GLASS NIGHT 214

A bug is floating in the glass. A pretty big one. Kicking its legs weakly.

215 INT. PRATT'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT 215

He dashes his drink at the window.

PRATT (screaming)
BUGS! GODDAM BUGS! THIS BLACKOUT BETTER NOT KEEP THE GODDAM EXTERMI-NATORS FROM COMING!

215 CONTINUED 215

PRATT turns away from the window. In the eerie gloom he sees what has happened. He is beyond screaming, at least for this moment. His eyes widen, and his jaw drops. A strange gagging, grunting sound begins to escape his throat.

216 INT. PRATT'S LIVING ROOM, PRATT'S POV NIGHT 216

Yeah, it's pretty horrible, all right. The little buggers are everywhere--millions of them. And they are noticeably moving toward PRATT.

217 INT. PRATT NIGHT 217

One of the "spiders" (for want of a better word) drops in his hair. NOW he begins to scream. He beats at the top of his head madly, and finally manages to dislodge it--onto his hand.

He screams in pain and finally manages to whip it off his hand. He looks at his hand, unbelieving. It's bleeding.

As if on signal, the other spider-like creatures begin to drop from the curtain-rod, landing on his head, his neck, his shoulders.

In a fever of panic, PRATT runs across the living room toward the door. Bugs begin to inundate his shoes, his pantslegs. We hear the SOUNDS of them crunching under his shoes like soggy popcorn.

He veers toward his bedroom door, still beating madly at the spider-things on his neck, head, and shoulders. They are biting, and we see blood oozing from the lacerations. He reaches the door, opens it, and bursts through.

218 INT. PRATT'S BEDROOM NIGHT 218

No bugs here except the ones PRATT has brought in on his body. He closes the door, locks it. He brushes the spider-things off him one by one, still screaming, and stamps them under his feet. We may hear splatting SOUNDS. He dislodges bugs from his shoes, from his cuffs, and stamps them. He is panting with fear and revulsion. He brushes the remaining bugs off and looks around wildly. But the bedroom is, as they say, lookin good.

Then his eyes fix on the door. Bugs are trundling under it. We can hear scratching SOUNDS as others go to work on it with their mandibles.

PRATT begins to squash the new influx of bugs, but this

218 CONTINUED 218

is a losing proposition. There are too many of them. He looks around, then grabs a throw rug off the floor. He stuffs it against the small crack at the bottom of the door, then stamps the rest of the bugs.

He has gotten at least nominal control over himself again. He stands there for a moment, breathing hard, and then hurries across to the telephone on the bed-table. He snatches it up and dials 0.

The telephone begins to ring...and ring...and ring.

PRATT (screams)
WHITE! ANSWER YOUR FUCKING PHONE, YOU BLACK BASTARD!

219 INT. THE LOBBY OF THE BUILDING NIGHT 219

Deserted. THE CAMERA is looking at the switchboard. Several of the lights are flashing--PRATT is apparently not the only one trying to call down--but there's no one to answer, WHITE being tucked away somewhere between the fourth and fifth floors.

220 INT. PRATT'S BEDROOM NIGHT 220

He drops the phone with a snarl, then picks it up again. He dials 911.

MEGGS
Hello, police. Sergeant Meggs. State your name and the nature of your problem, please.

PRATT
This is Upson Pratt! THE Upson Pratt! I've got bugs!

MEGGS
Everybody does tonight, man. You mind getting off? We've got a blackout happening, in case you didn't notice.

PRATT (panic)
No...bugs! BUGS! There are millions of them! They bite! They--

He breaks off, and looks toward the door. That chewing SOUND is louder. Little pieces of the door are starting to fall off.

PRATT
THEY'RE CHEWING THROUGH THE DOOR!

220 CONTINUED 220

MEGGS
Well, I'll tell you what. Whatever you stopped drinking an hour ago, go have yourself a good shot of it. They'll go away.

PRATT
No, this is real! Please...for God's sake, man, it's real!

MEGGS
I'm sorry. On a slow night we could talk about it, man. But I just don't have time to bullshit with you.

PRATT (screaming)
I DON'T THINK YOU UNDERSTAND WHO YOU'RE TALKING TO! THIS IS UPSON PRATT, YOU CHEAP COP! UPSON PRATT! UPSON--

A clicking SOUND, followed by the buzz of an open line. With a shriek, PRATT throws the phone across the room.

He throws a terrified glance at the door, where the chewing SOUNDS are getting steadily louder. Now a hole appears--several of them--and the river of bugs begins to crawl down the door.

He looks away, toward the bed--and steps away, his face drawn in horror.

221 INT. PRATT'S BED NIGHT 221

The bed is covered by a quilted satin coverlet, powder blue. Embroidered on it in a darker blue are the entwined initials U.P.

The quilt is moving--rippling. There is a soft, almost slithery SOUND.

222 INT. PRATT NIGHT 222

With a convulsive movement he steps forward and rips the coverlet back. Begins to scream again. The bed is full of bugs--more millions. They immediately begin to creep toward him.

Others come from beneath the bed. Still others from the heating vents and through the louvres of the air conditioner.

222 CONTINUED 222

He looks back at the door, which is almost totally destroyed now. The bugs are also coming from that direction.

Screaming, PRATT runs to his final place of refuge--the bathroom.

He turns on the light--cold white flourescents--and pulls the door shut. We hear the clicking SOUND of the turning lock. The bedroom now belongs to the bugs.

223 INT. THE BATHROOM MEDICINE CABINET NIGHT 223

We see PRATT'S terrorized, sweaty face in the medicine cabinet mirror, but he's reaching for what's on top. Lined up neatly like soldiers are half a dozen spray cans of Black Flag bug-spray. He takes one of them.

THE CAMERA MOVES BACK to take in PRATT. He fumbles the cap off the bug cannister and turns to face the door, lips pulling back in a snarl. Outside, we can hear the SOUND of the bugs attacking the bathroom door.

PRATT (hysterical)
Come on and try it! Just try it!
Just--

Something occurs to him, and he suddenly turns back to the medicine cabinet. He opens it...and a black flood of squirming bugs come out. Some run up his arms. Screaming, he staggers away.

Looks down into the toilet. No relief here; the toilet is also full of them. They're climbing inexorably up the porcelain, over the drowned bodies of their comrades.

PRATT is trying to get the bugs off his arms; he's also looking at the door with terror. The door is giving away before the crunching, munching assault of the bugs.

Now he looks at the tub. The shower-curtain is drawn. PRATT rakes it back--and here is the final horror. The tub is full--FULL TO THE RIM--with a squirming multitude of great big bugs. PRATT begins to shriek and shoot the spray at them blindly.

224 INT. THE ELEVATOR NIGHT 224

WHITE is sitting on the floor. He looks around disgustedly.

WHITE
Blackout. Must be. Hope you're enjoying y'self, Mr. Pratt!

225 INT. PRATT'S BATHROOM NIGHT 225

PRATT is covered with bugs. They're on his clothes, his hands, his arms, his face. He opens his mouth to scream and bugs run busily into his mouth. He begins to gag and spit.

He drops his can of bug-spray and begins to run madly around the small space of the bathroom, completely bull-shit, clawing at his face.

226 INT. THE BUILDING LOBBY NIGHT 226

Through the glass doors, we see a panel-truck pull up. Written on the side is PINELLI BROTHERS, and below that 24-HR. EXTERMINATION SERVICE.

Two men dressed in white coveralls get out and come toward the double glass doors. Each is carrying a large case. They try the doors. But they are locked, of course; WHITE threw the bolt when he went up to check MRS. McCARTHY'S shower.

They tug at the doors and holler for a bit--all to no good, of course.

1st MAN
Well, what the hell do we do now?

2nd MAN (total disgust)
You do whatever you want. I'm goin home.

1st MAN
We won't get four blocks with all the traffic lights out.

2nd MAN
So let's go over to O'Lunny's and get shitfaced.

The 1st MAN brightens at this prospect.

1st MAN
Match you for beers?

2nd MAN
Fuck that! Match you for PITCHERS!

1st MAN
Sold! You didn't really want to see your old lady tonight, do you?

2nd MAN
Naw! She drives me bugs!

226 CONTINUED 226

They look at each other for a moment and then burst out laughing. They stroll off together, leaving the truck at the curb.

227 INT. PRATT'S BEDROOM NIGHT 227

No bugs here. Not a sign of a bug.

228 INT. PRATT'S KITCHEN NIGHT 228

Ditto--not a bug to be seen. THE CAMERA moves around and shows us that everything, including the sink-drain, is in apple-pie order.

229 INT. PRATT'S BATHROOM NIGHT 229

No bugs here, either. The shower-curtain is raked back, showing us the tub...gleaming and spotless. The door is shut, and whole. PRATT is sitting on the floor, his head tilted back, his eyes glazed. Dead. The expression stamped on his face is one of unutterable horror. Beside one stiffening hand is a spray-can of Black Flag bug-spray.

THE CAMERA MOVES IN on PRATT'S face. Closer. Closer. Now PRATT'S face fills the screen--and a cockroach trundles out of one nostril.

FREEZE-FRAME. The FREEZE-FRAME becomes a comic picture which shows UPSON PRATT'S dead face, a cockroach halfway between his nostril and upper lip. Below this frame (which takes up half the page, we read this: "Well, that's our last yell-yarn for this time, kiddies...and until the Creepshow returns to your town, all we can say is...PLEASANT DREAMS!"

SOUNDS come in, but not those of rain, wind, and thunder; the storm is over. Now we hear birds...birds and the whining, revving roar of an engine, plus the whine of a big dump-truck piston mashing trash.

The light is different, too, as it falls on the CREEPSHOW comic book. It is dawnlight now.

The wind flutters this final page a bit, then flips it over. Now, on the left, is an ad for monster masks. On the right--the inside of the magazine's back cover--is one of those standard ads: greeting-cards, Daisy air-rifles, Cloverine Brand Salve, take your pick (would one of those companies give permission? Probably--if not, we could whomp something up).

229 CONTINUED 229

The important thing about this "third cover" is that a rectangle of it is gone--down at the lower right. It has been neatly snipped out.

All of this time, the SOUND of the approaching dump-truck has been getting closer and louder; we can now also hear the clang of garbage cans, and the garbage-men shouting back and forth to each other; those bellowed monosyllables that apparently form a sub-language for trash-collectors: "Ho!" and "Eyyap!" and "Back-ough!" and "Yer-ass!"

The wind flutters this final page over, and the CREEPSHOW mag is now closed, cover down, back up, on the edge of the curb. The back page is a full-page, full-color ad featuring a hideous, squat doll, chocolate-brown in color. It is headed by the inevitable "HEY, KIDS!" It is an ad for a voodoo doll. The copy informs the kid that for only $4.99 (send check or money-order, no C.O.D.'s, please) he/she can have a GENUINE HAITIAN VOODOO DOLL. Get even with the local bully! Make the prettiest girl in school fall in love with you! Make the captain of the opposing team in this week's football-game fall under a bus the day before the match! All you need to do is obtain a lock of the victim's hair...or a fingernail... and a bit of clothing.

Also blah...blah...blah...but all we really need to do is to get the idea...and to see that the coupon has been clipped.

230 EXT. MAPLE STREET EARLY MORNING 230

The Municipal Dump Truck is approaching a suburban ranch-house which we will recognize--it is the one belonging to STAN (the comic book hater), his wife, and BILLY--whose comic-book ended up in the trash at the beginning of the movie.

One guy is driving the truck; two others (1st TRASHMAN and 2nd TRASHMAN) are lifting cans, dumping them, then riding on the back of the lumbering truck to the next house.

They reach STAN'S house.

1st TRASHMAN

Ho-up!

The truck stops. They get STAN'S garbage--yessir, yessir, three cans full--and dump it into the truck's maw. Throw the cans back onto the curb with customary trashmen arrogance.

230 CONTINUED 230

2nd TRASHMAN
Brag-GOWN!

Whining, howling SOUND of the mashing piston going to work; the trash is gradually pushed back into the darkness.

1st TRASHMAN
Go-awn!

The truck starts down the street again. The 2nd TRASHMAN spots the CREEPSHOW comic book lying on the edge of the curbing.

2nd TRASHMAN
Loogit-that!

1st TRASHMAN
Ug-gettit.

1st TRASHMAN hops off the truck, runs over, picks up the comic book. Grins at the hideous voodoo doll on the back. Turns it over; looks at the cover. He folds the magazine, stuffs it into the back pocket of his coverall, and runs back to the truck. Hops up on the step.

2nd TRASHMAN
Whudja-get?

1st TRASHMAN takes it out, shows him.

1st TRASHMAN
Comig-book. Mah-kidz-lovem.

They have approached a fresh cache of garbage-cans.

1st TRASHMAN
Ho-up!

The truck stops. They get off and run toward the trash-cans. We see half of the CREEPSHOW logo flapping in the 1st TRASHMAN'S pocket.

231 INT. A BREAKFAST NOOK MORNING 231

STAN and his wife--MAXINE--are sitting at a breakfast-nook table in the kitchen that's just big enough for three. The two of them are facing each other. At the end, a place has been set--a bowl of dry cereal, milk, juice. BILLY'S place.

STAN looks terrible. He's dressed in the gray fatigues of a working man. His face is heavily lined. He's not eating; he's constantly rubbing his neck.

231 CONTINUED 231

STAN (grumpy)
Where's Billy?

MAXINE
He'll be down in a minute. I know he's up. Stan, are you okay?

STAN
Didn't sleep much last night.

MAXINE
The storm?

STAN
No, this goddam stiff neck! I can barely turn my head.

MAXINE (complacently)
You must have strained it.

STAN (morose)
Yeah. I guess. I don't--OW!

He claps his left hand to his neck, grimacing horribly.

MAXINE (cooing)
Oh, you poor old bear! Want me to get the Ben-Gay?

STAN (bellowing)
NO!

She recoils. STAN sits there rubbing his neck.

232 INT. BILLY'S BEDROOM, UPSTAIRS MORNING 232

BILLY sits in his chair at his desk, in a slanting bar of morning sun. He's dressed for school, and there is a neat pile of schoolbooks on his desk.

In one hand he is holding the voodoo doll from the back ad on the CREEPSHOW magazine. Its head, bald in the advertisement, has been topped with a tuft of black hair that looks very much like his father's hair. The hair has been scotch-taped on. The doll is dressed in gray cloth that should also look familiar.

In his other hand, BILLY holds a long hatpin.

BILLY (hissing)
Teach you to throw away my comic-books!

232 CONTINUED 232

He jams the hatpin viciously into the doll's neck.

233 INT. IN THE KITCHEN-NOOK MORNING 233

STAN claps his hand to his neck again, and THE CAMERA MOVES IN TO CLOSE-UP. We see that a small patch of gray cloth has been scissored from the cuff of his shirt.

234 INT. BILLY'S BEDROOM, UPSTAIRS MORNING 234

BILLY (grinning)
Ready for another shot, dad?

He plunges the pin into the neck of the doll; from downstairs we hear STAN cry out in pain.

FREEZE-FRAME. Here we have a full-color picture of BILLY with his voodoo doll.

THE CAMERA PULLS BACK and we see that this is the cover of CREEPSHOW'S second issue.

THE CAMERA PULLS BACK FURTHER and we see it is on a newsstand, flanked by other current horror comics.

RUN FINAL CREDITS OVER THIS.

FADE OUT.